



# ANIMAL LIFE READERS

EDITED BY

EDITH CARRINGTON AND ERNEST BELL

WITH PICTURES BY

HARRISON WEIR

AND OTHERS

HISTORY OF THE ROBINS  
AND  
KEEPER'S TRAVELS



DEATH OF ROBIN'S MATE.

*See page 49.*

MRS. TRIMMER'S  
HISTORY OF THE ROBINS  
AND  
KEEPER'S TRAVELS

ADAPTED BY

EDITH CARRINGTON

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"A STORY OF WINGS," ETC., ETC.

*ILLUSTRATED BY ~~HARRISON WEIR~~*

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## PREFACE.

MRS. TRIMMER'S "HISTORY OF THE ROBINS," which was read with delight by the great grandparents of the present younger generation, may almost be called an English classic. It was one of the earliest books devoted to the teaching of humanity towards animals. Considering the great advance which has been made in the ethics of humanity during the last fifty years, it is remarkable and greatly to the credit of the authoress that in very few particulars has any alteration been needed to make the teaching of the book well abreast with the highest standard of to-day.

The diction, however, of the original story, which represented the "correct" style of its period, appears so very stilted to modern ears that it has been necessary to re-write the greater part of the book to adapt it to the taste of the present freer and less precise age.

It is hoped that in its new form the story may enter another lease of useful life.

"KEEPER'S TRAVELS" is also so old a favourite that no apology is needed for including it in this volume. It is printed also with some alteration, and the illustrations by MR. WEIR are a new feature in this edition.

E. B.



# HISTORY OF THE

## 1. THE ROBIN'S NEST.

1. In a hole which time had made in an old wall, over which ivy grew, a pair of redbreasts built their nest. No place could have been better chosen for the purpose.

2. It was sheltered from the rain, screened from the wind, and was in an orchard which belonged to a gentleman who had told all his servants that they must not destroy or meddle with the work of any little songsters in his grounds.

3. In this happy place, into which no thief dared to come, the hen redbreast laid four eggs and then took her seat upon them. She made up her mind that nothing should tempt her to leave the nest until she had hatched her young brood.

4. Her kind mate took her place for a short time each morning while she picked up a hasty breakfast, and he often cheered her with his song before he had tasted any food himself.

5. At length the day came when the happy

mother heard the chirping of her little ones. In the most tender way in the world she spread her motherly wings to cover them. Then she threw out the eggshells in which they had been pent up.

6. She pressed them to her breast and showed them to her mate, who was very pleased to look at his children, and seated himself by her side that he might share her joy.

7. "We shall enjoy ourselves very much while we bring up our little family," said he; "but I dare say it will be a great deal of trouble. I would do it all myself if I could, but you see I cannot, do what I will, work hard enough to supply all our nestlings with enough to eat. So you must help too."

8. The mother bird said that she would be very glad to help, and added that it would not be needful for her to be away from the nest long at a time, as she had found a place in the orchard where food was put on purpose for birds to pick up.

9. A chaffinch had told her, so she said, that there was no danger at all in going to this place for food. "That is very lucky indeed for us," replied her mate, "for we really have so many children that we shall hardly know what to do."

10. "We must do all we can to get them enough to eat, and I myself must fly further from home than I have ever done before, for



THE ROBIN'S NEST.

there are some kinds of insects which are very good for young robins, but which cannot be found close to the nest."

11. The little ones now began to be hungry, and opened their gaping mouths for food, on which their kind father at once flew forth to find it for them, and he fed them by turns, as well as giving a bit to his good mate.

12. This was a hard day's work, and when evening came on he was glad to take a little rest. Tucking his head under his wing, he soon fell asleep. His mate did the same thing. The four little ones had gone to sleep long before.

13. The next morning they were awaked by the song of a skylark, just as the sun was rising. He had his nest near the orchard, and as the young redbreasts were in a hurry for food their father got ready to fetch it.

14. He asked his mate to go with him to the place of which she had spoken, where food was to be found. "So I will," said she, "but it is too early now. You had better go by yourself first and get breakfast for the little ones."

Questions : 1. What spot did the robins choose for their nest? 2. What had the owner of the orchard told his servants? 3. What did the robin do to help his mate while she was sitting? 4. What did the mother bird say that she had found? 5. Whom did the robin feed besides his young ones?

## 2. THE YOUNG ROBINS.

1. The robin thought his mate quite right in not leaving the nest till the sun was hot. He set to work and fetched food alone. Then he fed all his darlings, to whom he gave the names of Robin, Dicky, Pecksy, and Flapsy.

2. When this kind deed was done, the father bird perched on a tree, and while he rested he sang a tune to his family till his mate, springing from the nest, called him to go with her to a yard which belonged to the house close by.

3. No sooner did the happy pair draw near to the window of the breakfast-room than it was quickly thrown open by Harriet Benson, a little girl about eleven years old. She was the daughter of the lady to whom the house belonged.

4. Harriet, with great delight, called her brother to see the two robin redbreasts, and she was soon joined by Fred, a chubby, rosy-cheeked boy, about six years of age.

5. As soon as he had taken a peep at the robins he ran to his mother and asked her to give him something to feed them with. "I must have a great piece of bread this morning," said he, "for there are all the sparrows and chaffinches

that come every day, and two robin redbreasts besides."

6. "Here is a piece for you, Fred," replied Mrs. Benson, cutting a loaf that was on the table. "But if so many little beggars come to you every day, and bring more and more with them, we must find some other sort of food for them."

7. "It is not right to cut pieces from a loaf when stale scraps might do as well. There are many hungry children who want bread, and we must think of them too. Would you let a poor little starving boy go without breakfast and give it to the birds?"

8. "No," said Fred, "I would rather give my own breakfast to a starving boy than that he should go without any. But where shall I get something for the birds? I will ask cook and John to save all the bits they can."

9. "A very good plan," said Mrs. Benson; "besides this, you might spare a penny of your pocket-money now and then to spend on stale bread at the baker's for the birds. He will let you have a large loaf for the money."

10. Harriet, being in a hurry to do something for the birds, now asked her brother to remember that while he was talking they might fly away unfed. So Fred ran to the window with the bread in his hand.

11. When Harriet first showed herself at the

window the winged beggars drew near with eager hopes of seeing her crumble the daily handful which their kind little friend never failed to give them.

12. They could not make out why it was so long coming, and were just going away, thinking that there was nothing for them, when Fred, breaking a bit from the piece in his hand, tried to scatter it among the little crowd.

13. As he threw the crumbs he called out "Dicky, Dicky!" On hearing the well-known sound, the little flock at once drew near. Fred begged that his sister would let him feed all the birds himself.

14. But he found that he could not fling the crumbs far enough for the redbreasts, who, being strangers, kept a good way off. So he asked Harriet to throw some of them to the very spot where the loving pair stood waiting for her notice.

15. With grateful hearts they picked up the crumbs thrown to them, and in the meanwhile the other birds, having had enough, flew away, and they were left alone.

Questions : 1. What were the four young robins named? 2. Who opened the window when the robins drew near? 3. Who came to join Harriet? 4. What did Fred ask his mother to give him? 5. What did he say that he would do to get food for the birds? 6. What did his mother say that he might do with a penny?

### 3. FRED AND THE BUTTERFLY.

1. It was with great joy that Fred saw the two robins feeding. And Harriet thought that in time they would become tame. "Be sure you don't forget to ask cook," she said, "and mind when you are eating not to let your crumbs go on the carpet, but keep them in your lap."

2. "I will be careful about my crumbs, too, and we will collect all that are made at the dinner-table. And if we cannot get enough for the birds in this way, I will spend some of my own money in buying food for them."

3. "Oh," said Fred, "I would give all the money I have in the world to buy food for my dear, dear birds! I will spend it on the birds instead of buying sweets or marbles for myself."

4. As he spoke, the redbreasts, having finished their meal, the mother bird seemed to be in a hurry to return to her nest. Her mate wished her to go, and so she flew as fast as she could homewards.

5. The father robin tuned his flute, and gave a sweet note or two of thanks to his good friends Harriet and Fred before he took flight to the



garden, where there was a good chance of finding worms for his little ones.

6. Fred was very sorry that the robins were gone, but his sister said, to comfort him, that most likely they would come back to the same place next day, as they had eaten so good a meal there.

7. Mrs. Benson then shut the window, took



A LOVING PAIR.

little Fred on her lap, and began talking to them both. "I am very glad to see you so fond of animals, my dear little girl and boy," she said.

8. "And I wish you to go on feeling as kindly as you do towards dumb creatures. But you must not let your tender feeling towards animals grow so strong as to make you forget those who are like yourselves.

9: "The love of animals must not make us unkind to the poor. We must never forget the distress and pain which men, women, and children have to bear, and waste on animals what we ought to give to human beings."

10. Harriet promised to do as her mother bade her. But Fred was looking at a butterfly which was fluttering in the window, longing to get out and try its wings in the air and sunshine. He had hardly heard his mother's words.

11. Fred was very anxious to catch the butterfly, but his mother would not even let him touch it, because, she told him, he could not well lay hold of its wings without hurting it, and it would be much happier free.

12. "How would you like it, Fred, if, when you were going out to play, somebody were to catch hold of you tightly, scratch you all over, then perhaps offer you something nasty to eat, and shut you up in a little dark room?"

13. "Yet this is the fate to which many a harmless insect is doomed by thoughtless children." As soon as Fred understood that he could not catch the butterfly without hurting it, he told his mother at once that he would carry it out of doors.

14. "Well, it will do better if we open the window," said his mother, and she told Harriet to lift the sash. The happy insect was glad to

fly away, and Fred soon had the pleasure of seeing it sitting on a red rose to sip the honey.

Questions : 1. What did Harriet remind her brother to do ?  
3 What did Fred say that he would give for the birds ?  
2. What did his mother tell him not to forget ? 4. What was Fred looking at in the window ? 5 What did he wish to do with the butterfly ? 6. What did he do with it at last ?

#### 4. FEEDING THE NESTLINGS.

1. When breakfast was over, Mrs. Benson reminded the little girl and boy that it was almost time for their lessons to begin. But she told them that they might go for a run in the garden before they set to work.

2. While he was out, Fred amused himself by watching the butterfly as it flew from flower to flower. This gave him more pleasure than he could possibly have had in keeping the gay little thing a prisoner.

3. Let us now see what became of our red-breasts after they left their young friends. The mother bird, as I told you, went at once to the nest. Her little heart beat as she came in, and she called in an anxious voice, "Are you all safe, my little dears?"

4. "All safe, dear mother," replied Pecksy,

“but a little hungry, and very cold.” “Well,” said their mother, “I can soon make you warm, but as to giving you something to eat, I must leave that to your father. He will soon be here, no doubt.”

5. Then, spreading her feathers over them all, she soon made them nice and warm. In a short time her mate came back, for he only stayed at Mr. Benson’s long enough to finish his song and sip some clear water which his friends always kept ready for the birds.

6. He brought in his mouth a worm, which was given to Robin, and was going to fetch one for Dicky, when his mate said, “My young ones are now hatched, and you can keep them warm as well as myself. Take my place, and I will fetch the next worm.”

7. “Very well,” said he. “I agree to that because I think that a little flying now and then will do you good after so much sitting. But, to save you trouble, I can tell you of a place where there are plenty of fine worms.”

8. He then told her the way to this spot, and as soon as she got off the nest he placed himself on it and gathered his young ones under his wings. “Come, my dears,” said he, “let us see what kind of nurse I can make; but an awkward one, I fear.

9. “It is not every mother bird even who is a

good nurse; but you are most fortunate in yours, for she is a most tender one, and I hope you will be grateful to her for her kindness." They all promised that they would.

10. "Well, then," said he, "I will sing you a song." He did so, and it was a merry one, and delighted them so much that they did not mind being under his wings, although they were not nearly so comfortable as when their mother sat over them.

11. Nor did they think the time long while she was away. She did not succeed in finding worms in the place of which her mate had told her, as she was frightened away by a boy. But she made all the haste she could.

12. Though more than one gay and giddy bird asked her to join in play, she thought of her duty, and went straight home the moment she had found a worm. This good mother preferred the pleasure of feeding Dicky to playing in the fields and woods.

13. As soon as the hen bird came near the nest, her mate started up to make room for her, and went to take his own turn in finding food for his family. "Good-bye once more," said he, and was out of sight in an instant.

14. "My dear children, how have you been getting on?" said their mother. "How are you?"

"Very well, thank you," they all replied at once.

"And we have been very merry," said Robin, "for my father has sung us a sweet song."

15. "I think that I should like to learn it," said Dicky.

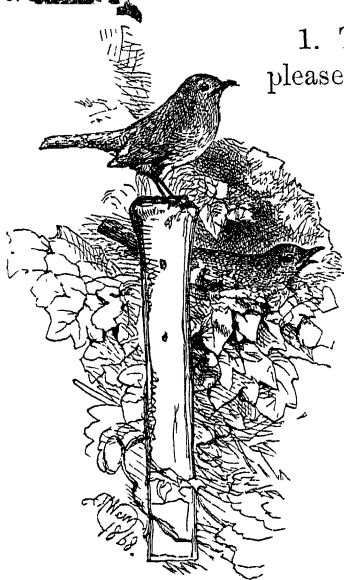
"Well," replied the mother, "he will teach it to you, I dare say. Here he comes, ask him."

"I am ashamed," said Dicky.

16. "Then you are a silly bird. What is there to be ashamed of? It is nothing wrong. There is no harm in asking your father to teach you a song."

Questions : 1. How did Fred amuse himself in the garden? 2. What did the young robins complain of when their mother came back? 3. What did the mother robin ask her mate to do while she went to fetch worms? 4. How did the robin amuse his young ones while she was away? 5. What did she like better than playing with the other birds?

## 5. ROBIN AND DICKY LEARNT TO SING.



1. The mother bird was pleased that her son should learn to sing. "Singing is a good and proper thing," said she; "you may be sure that your father would not do it if it were not so. And he will be glad for you to learn."

2. Then, turning to her mate, who had just stopped at the edge of the nest for an instant to pop a

worm into one of the hungry mouths, she said, "Am I not right in what I have just told them?"

3. "Quite right," said he. "I shall find great delight in teaching them all that I know myself. But we must talk of that another time. Who is to feed poor Pecksy, who has not had a bit yet, if I am to give singing lessons?"

4. "Oh, I—I will feed her," answered the

mother, and was gone in an instant. "And so you want to learn to sing, Dicky?" said the father. "Well, listen carefully that you may learn the notes, though you will not be able to sing till your voice is stronger."

5. Robin now said that the song was very pretty indeed, and that he should like to learn it, too. "By all means," said his father. "I will sing it very often so you may learn it if you like."

6. "As for me," said Flapsy, "I do not think I could have patience to learn it."

"Nobody can learn anything without taking trouble," said her father. "But I hope that if you have no taste for music you will try to learn something more useful."

7. "Well," said Pecksy, "I would try to learn music with all my might, but I do not think that I should ever get on at all."

"Perhaps not," said her father. "Do what your mother tells you. She knows best what you can do, and what will suit you best."

8. "She is no songstress herself, and yet she is very clever, I can tell you. Here she comes." Then, rising to make room for her, "Here is your seat, my love," said he, "and I will perch on the ivy."

9. The hen again sat over her brood, while her mate amused her with his singing and con-



versation till the evening, each parent bird flying out in turn to get food for their young ones.

10. In this way several days passed, and nothing of any importance happened. The nestlings grew and became stronger every day, and they learnt to know more about the world.

11. Each day the old birds paid a visit to their friends, Fred and Harriet. Fred had asked the cook and footman for food for his dear birds, and they both took pains to save some for them.

12. It happened one day that both the red-breasts, who always went together to Mrs. Benson's (because if one had waited till the other came back it would have missed the chance of being fed), that they were away longer than usual.

13. Like all good and wise children the little Bensons were early risers, and had always said their prayers, washed themselves, and learnt their lessons before breakfast.

14. But on this one day they had been tired by a long walk on the evening before, and lay in bed very late the next morning. But as soon as Fred was dressed, his sister, who was waiting for him, took him by the hand and led him downstairs.

Questions: 1. What did the robin say when asked to teach his son to sing? 2. What did the mother bird offer to do? 3. What did Flapsy think about learning music? 4. What was Fred ready to give to a poor man? 5. What made the little Bensons late one morning?

## 6. A QUARREL IN THE NEST.

1. No sooner was Fred downstairs than he rushed to ask the cook for her store of crumbs. As soon as he came into the breakfast-room, he ran quickly up to the window and tried to open it.

2. "What are you in such a hurry for?" said his mother. "Have you not a moment to spare for saying good morning to me?"

"Oh, my birds, my birds!" cried he.

"I understand," said Mrs. Benson. "You have forgotten to feed the poor little things. How was that?"

3. "We were so tired last night," said Harriet, "and this morning we overslept ourselves."

"That is all very well," said their mother, "but I am afraid that the birds will not know the reason. Make haste and feed them now."

4. "If you teach any living creature to depend on you, you must be careful not to disappoint it. If you cannot feed a pet yourself, you should find somebody else to do it."

5. Harriet listened to what her mother said, but I am sorry to say that Fred was more busy opening the window than attending to her words. As he could not manage to do what he wanted, Harriet went to help him.

6. Those of the birds outside that had nests ate the crumbs which were scattered as fast as they could, for the hen birds were anxious to get back to their little ones, and the cock birds wanted to fetch food for them.

7. The robins were among those who ate most quickly, and, having sung one song already at the children's bedroom window, the father robin did not think that he need stay to sing any more. They both went off.

8. When the mother bird arrived at the ivy wall she stopped at the entrance to the nest with a beating heart. But, seeing all her brood safe and well, she made haste to take them under her wings.

9. As soon as she was seated, she said, "You do not seem so cheerful as usual, my dears. What is the matter? How have you agreed while I was away?" To these questions no one seemed willing to reply.

10. The truth was that they had been quarrelling almost the whole time. "What, all silent?" said she. "I fear that you have not done what I told you. I am afraid that you have been fighting. Tell me the whole truth."

11. Robin, who knew that he had been most to blame, began to make excuses for himself before the others could have time to accuse him.

"I am sure, mother," said he, "I only gave

Dick a little peck because he crowded me so, and all the others joined him and fell upon me at once."

12. "Since you have begun, Robin," answered Dick, "I must speak; for you gave me a very hard peck, and I was afraid you had put out my eye.

13. "I am sure I made all the room I could for you, but you said you ought to have half the nest and be master when father and mother were out because you are the eldest."

14. "I don't like telling tales," said Flapsy, "but what Dicky says is very true, Robin. And you plucked two or three little feathers out of me only because I asked you not to behave so badly."

15. "And you trod upon me very hard," cried Pecksy, "for telling you that you had forgotten what our dear mother said to you before she left the nest."

Questions: 1. What did Fred do when he first came down? 2. What did his mother say about the creatures taught to depend on us? 3. What had the young robins been doing while the parents were away? 4. Who began to make excuses for himself? 5. What complaint did Dick bring against Robin? 6. What did Flapsy say about Robin?

## 7. ROBIN IN DISGRACE

1. "This is a sad story indeed," said the mother. "I am very sorry to find, Robin, that you show such a proud and bad temper already. If you go on like this we shall have no peace, and I shall always be in a fright while I am away."

2. "As for your being the eldest, that does not give you the right to bully your brothers and sisters. To show you that you are not master of the nest you must get from under my wing and sit outside while I cuddle the rest who are good."

3. Robin, feeling much ashamed, did as his mother told him. Dicky, who was a kind little bird, began to beg for him. "Do forgive Robin, dear mother," said he. "I forgive him what he did to me, and should not have said a word about it if I had not been obliged."

4. "You are a good bird, Dicky," said his mother; "but Robin has been so naughty that I must see him look more sorry for what he has done before I forgive him." At this instant her mate came back with a fine worm, and looked, as usual, for Robin.

5. "Give it to Dicky," said the mother bird to

him. "Robin must be fed last this morning." Dicky did not like to hurt Robin's feelings by taking the worm, yet, when his mother told him, he opened his mouth and swallowed the delicious morsel.

6. "What can be the matter?" said the good father, when he had emptied his mouth. "Surely none of the little ones have been naughty? I cannot stop to ask just now, for I left another fine worm behind, and it will be gone if I do not make haste."

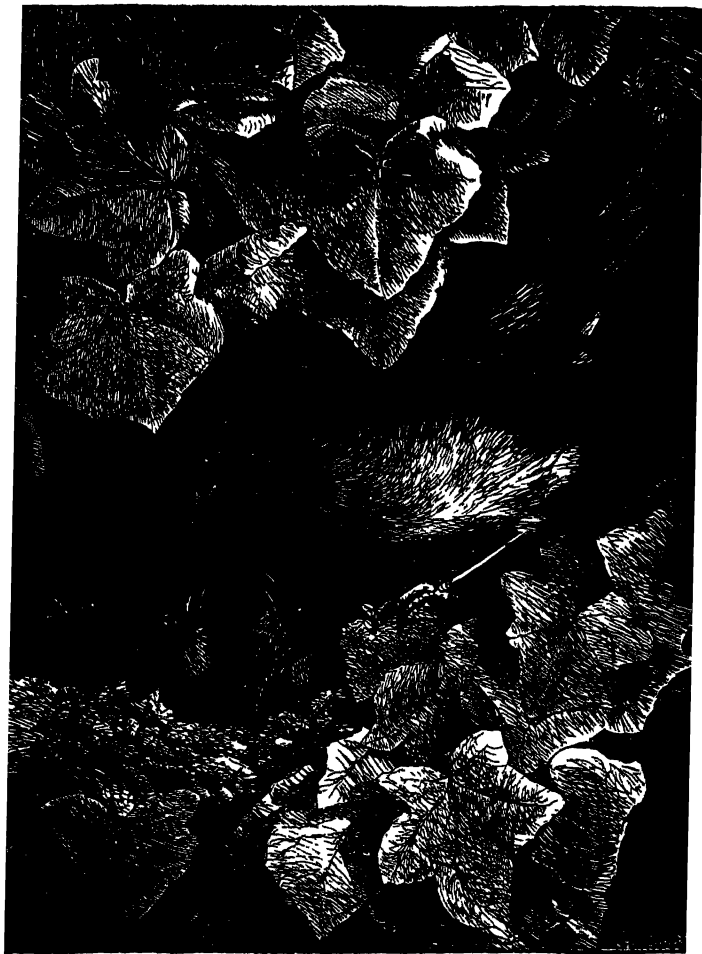
7. As soon as the old robin was gone, Dicky asked again that his brother might be forgiven. But, as the young Robin sat puffing out his feathers with anger and scorn, she would not hear a word in his behalf.

8. The father soon came and fed Flapsy, and then, thinking it best for his mate to scold Robin herself, he flew off again. During her father's absence, Pecksy, whose little heart was much grieved to see her brother in disgrace, tried to comfort him.

9. "Never mind, Robin. I will give you my breakfast if mother will let me."

"Oh," said naughty Robin, "I don't want any breakfast, thank you. If I cannot be helped first, I will not eat anything."

10. "Shall I ask mother to forgive you?" said Pecksy.



ROBIN LECTURED BY HIS FATHER.

"Mind your own business," said Robin. "If you had not been a pack of ill-natured things I should not have been shoved out here."

11. "Come back, Pecksy," said the mother. "I will not have you talk to such a naughty bird. I forbid every one of you even to go near him."

The father then came up, and Pecksy was fed.

"You can now rest yourself, my dear," said the mother, "your morning task is ended."

12. "Why, what has Robin done?" asked he.

"I am sorry to have to tell you that he has quarrelled with his brothers and sisters."

"Quarrelled with them? You surprise me. I should not have thought that he could be so foolish and unkind."

12. "Oh, that is not all," said the mother. "He boasts that he is the eldest, and wants to take half the nest for himself while we are out. And now he is sulky because I punished him, and did not feed him first, as usual."

13. "If that is the case leave me to manage him," said the father. "You had better go out into the fresh air a little, for you seem to be worried." "Yes, I am worried," said she. "After all my care and kindness I did not expect him to behave so badly."

- Questions: 1. What was Robin told to do as a punishment?  
2. Who was the first to beg that Robin might be forgiven? 3.



What did the mother say in reply to Dicky? 4. Who did the father feed first that morning? 5. What did Robin say to Flapsy when she offered him her breakfast? 6. What did the robin advise his mate to do?

### 8. HOW ROBIN WAS SCOLDED.

1. As soon as the mother was gone the father thus spoke to his naughty little son. "And so, Robin, you want to be master of the nest. A pretty master you would make, indeed, who do not know even how to rule you own temper!

2. "I shall not stay talking much to you now, but make up your mind to this. I will not allow you to tease the others and to worry your good mother. If you behave again as you did to-day I will turn you out of the nest before you can fly."

3. This threat frightened Robin very much. He also began to be very hungry as well as cold. So he promised to behave better for the future, and his brothers and sisters took his part, begging that he might be allowed to come back into the warm nest.

4. "That depends upon his mother," said the father. "But as it is the first time that he has done wrong, and as he seems to be sorry, I will ask her to forgive him." He then left the nest to look for her.

5. "Come back, my dear," said he. "Robin is sorry for what he has done, and I think that he may now be forgiven." Pleased with this news, the mother raised her head and flew to the nest. Robin felt half afraid to meet her.

6. But as soon as he had begged her pardon she made room for him again under her wing. He nestled closely to her side and was thankful for the warmth. But he was still hungry, and hardly liked to ask his father to fetch him food.

7. But the kind father, without waiting to be asked, flew into the nearest field, where he soon met with a worm. This he gave to Robin, who swallowed it thankfully. Thus peace was restored to the nest, of which they were all very glad.

8. But a few days after a fresh quarrel took place. All the little robins, except Pecksy, were often scolded for some fault or other. She was such a good little robin that she never did wrong, and so she was always praised by her parents.

9. The others grew tired of hearing Pecksy set up as a pattern for them to copy, and they made up their minds to treat her badly, calling her "mother's pet," and grumbling because, they said, all the best worms were saved for her.

10. Poor Pecksy bore all their unkind words

with patience, hoping that in time they would grow tired of being cross. But it happened one day that their mother came back while they were saying these things to Pecksy.

11. Hearing a great hubbub and noise among her young ones, she stopped on the ivy to find out what all the din was about, and soon popped into the midst of them in a way that showed she knew what was going on.

12. "Is this the way you speak to one another when I am not here?" cried she, in an angry tone. "Is this the feeling that brothers and sisters ought to have for each other? You ought to be ashamed of yourselves.

13. "And how dare you say that Pecksy is better fed than the rest of you, when your father and I divide everything quite fairly? I have seen that something was the matter with Pecksy for several days.

14. "In future I shall give her the warmest place in the nest, and I will turn you all out if I see any more of this. You must treat Pecksy well, or it will be the worse for you." Saying these words, the mother ruffled out her feathers till she looked quite fierce.

15. Robin, Dicky, and Flapsy were in a fine fright at this, and Pecksy tried to soften the anger of her mother. "I am sure they did not mean what they said," said she. "I do not

want to keep the best place for myself. Let us take it in turns to have it."

16. This kind speech made peace in the nest. The other little robins felt vexed with themselves for having teased so good a sister, and they said so. Pecksy was ready to spring out of the nest in her joy at finding all right again.

Questions · 1 What did the father bird threaten to do if Robin did not behave better ? 2. What was it that Robin did not like to ask his father ? 3. Of whom did the nestlings grow envious ? 4 What did the mother bird say that she should give Pecksy ? 5. What excuse did Pecksy make for the rest ?

## 9. THE CHILDREN AND THE ROBINS

1. Robin was a very strong bird, and robust, though not remarkable for his beauty. There was a great briskness in his manner, which made him lively and pleasant to look at. He was a bird who was sure to please.

2 His father judged from the tone of his chirpings that he would one day be a good singer. Dicky had very fine feathers, though, being young, he wore no scarlet waistcoat ; yet his body and wings looked very pretty, and his eyes sparkled like diamonds.

3. Flapsy was also very pretty, but her fine

shape was the best thing about her, for her feathers were not very bright. Pecksy was a plain little body, but her temper was so sweet that no one could help loving her.

4. She was never out of temper, and she was always ready to give up her own way. The kind parents gave up all their time to the little ones, but made their daily visit to Fred and Harriet, who never forgot to spread food for the little birds.

5. The old robins, made friendly by being cared for so kindly every day, became more and more tame. At last they would come shyly into the room and feed on the breakfast-table. Fred was so delighted that he wanted to catch them.

6. But his mother told him that this would be the way to drive them away. The robins had trusted him as a friend, she said, and it would be a bad thing to repay them by taking their freedom away.

7. Harriet begged him not to frighten them, and so he gave up the wish to catch the birds, though he could not help saying how much he should like to keep them in a cage that he might feed them all day long.

8. "And do you really think, Fred, that these delicate little creatures are such gluttons as to think of nothing but eating and drinking?" said Mrs. Benson. "If they did so, they would soon

die. But they know better, and eat only when they are hungry.

9. "As soon as they have had enough they leave off. And they like to do other things besides feeding. They have their little ones to care for, and they cannot be well in a cage where they cannot fly, any more than you would be well in a small room where you could not run about.

10. "Robins are not always wanting to stuff. Many a little boy may learn a lesson from them. Did you ever hear of a little boy who, if a cake or anything nice is given to him, will eat till he makes himself sick?"

11. Fred looked ashamed, for he knew that he was rather too fond of eating sweets. "Well," said his mother, "I see that you do know that little boy. When you see him next, tell him, with my love, that I hope he will never be more greedy than the redbreasts."

12. The little birds soon flew out at the window, and, as soon as they were gone, Mrs. Benson went on: "Think again, Fred. I am sure you would not like to shut up these sweet little birds in a cage only that you might have the pleasure of feeding them.

13. "Fancy how wretched you would feel, always shut up in one small room. Would you like that, even if you had enough to eat and

drink? What would you do if you were never allowed to run or jump, or go from place to place again?

14. "It is as dreadful for a bird to be shut up in a cage as for a boy to be shut up in prison. The caged bird cannot use his wings, he is parted from his friends, and he cannot enjoy the pleasure of flying about in the fresh air."

Questions · 1. What sort of bird was Robin? 2. Describe Dicky. 3. What kind of temper had Pecksy? 4. What did Fred wish to do to the tame robins? 5. What did his mother say about feeding robins all day? 6. What reasons did she give for not caging birds?

## 10. CANARIES IN CAGES.

1. "There is another reason why it is cruel to keep birds in cages," said Mrs. Benson. "It is, that they cannot build nests and rear young ones there. It is the greatest pleasure which a bird knows, to have a home, and little birds to tend.

2. "And besides this, by keeping birds in cages we prevent them from doing useful work in clearing the fields and gardens of insects and grubs. The keeping of any birds in cages is an evil and cruel bad custom."

3. "But, mother," said Harriet, "if it is wrong to catch birds or keep them in cages, why did you at one time keep that little canary?"

"That was different," said Mrs. Benson. "By keeping that poor little bird I did it a kindness, for I bought it from a man who did not treat it well.

4. "That kind of bird comes from a warm country, and it would have died from the cold if I had let it go. Still, I think it is a pity to keep even a canary in a cage. No creature which has wings ought to be kept so that it cannot use them.

5. "If I had turned it loose, too, the sparrows and other birds would have seen that it was a stranger, and they would have pecked it. It is their nature to chase any bird which they see unlike those which they know.

6. "I remember once seeing a poor little canary which had flown out at a window. It was starving for want of food, for after being long in a cage no bird knows how to find food for itself in the fields and woods.

7. "A whole mob of little birds were hunting this poor little canary from tree to tree, and it was nearly frightened to death. It looked like a little foreigner followed by a rabble of boys laughing at him because he looked different from them."





FREE AND HAPPY BIRDS.

8. "And what became of the poor little thing, mother?"

"Well," said Mrs. Benson, "I hung up a cage, with seed and water in it, on a tree near.

9. "No sooner had I done this than the poor little bird flew into it. I had great pleasure in seeing how glad the canary was to be safe again. Yet it never can be right to bring any bird up in such a way as to make a cage seem its best refuge.

10. "There have been wretched human prisoners who have begged to go back into their jails again after spending many years there. That is what the canary did. But if he and his parents had never been caged, it would have been far better."

11. "What became of him, mother?" asked Harriet.

"I kept him for a little while, but as I could not bear to see any bird cooped up in a cage I gave it to Mr. Bruce, who has a large place made of wire-work in which it could at least fly about.

12. "The song of a bird sounds harsh and ugly to my ears when the singer is caged. I would rather hear the little creatures warbling free, or else go without their music."

13. "I see," said Harriet. "I shall never wish to keep any bird in a cage, not even a canary



THE POOR CANARY.

I would rather tame them while they are free, or else find something else to amuse me which can hurt nothing.”

Questions : 1. What other reason did Mrs. Benson give to show that keeping birds in cages is cruel ? 2. By keeping birds in cages what useful work do we prevent them from doing ? 3. Why did Mrs. Benson buy a canary ? 4. What did she do for the canary which was being teased by other birds ? 5. What did Mrs. Benson say of a bird's song indoors ?

## 11. THE NESTLINGS HAVE A FRIGHT.

1. “I wonder,” said Fred, “whether our red-breasts have got a nest? I will watch tomorrow which way they fly, for I should like to see the little ones.”

“And what will you do if you find them out?” said his mother.

2. “Why,” said Fred, “I should like to bring the nest home and put it in a tree near the house, and then I would scatter crumbs for the old ones to feed them with.”

3. “You mean to do them a kindness,” said Mrs. Benson, “but the robins would not like that at all. Many birds forsake their nests if anyone meddles with them, so you must be sure to leave them alone if you find them. Do you

understand?" Harriet then said that she thought it very cruel to take birds' nests.

4. "Ah, my dear," said Mrs. Benson, "those who do such cruel things do not know how much pain they cause. Every living creature can feel sorrow, and we should always try to make animals happy instead of sad."

5. Mrs. Benson then left them, and the little boy and girl spent a pleasant half-hour out of doors. In the meantime the hen redbreast went back to the nest, while her mate took flight in search of food.

6. When the mother drew near she was surprised at not hearing, as usual, the chirping of her young ones, and what was her surprise at seeing them all crowded together trembling with fright!

"What is the matter, my dears?" said she.

7. "Oh, my dear mother!" cried Robin, who first dared to raise his head, "is it you?"

Pecksy then looked up too, and begged her mother to come into the nest as fast as she could. The little tremblers crept under her wings, trying to hide themselves.

8. "What has frightened you so much?" said she.

"Oh, I do not know," replied Dicky; "but we have seen such a dreadful monster! I never saw anything like it before!"

"A monster, my dear, tell me what it was like."

"I cannot," said Dicky, "it was too dreadful to be described."

9. "Frightful, indeed," said Robin, "but I had a full view of it, and will tell you what it was like as well as I can."

"We were all sitting in the nest and were very happy together: Dicky and I were trying to sing, when suddenly we heard a noise against the wall."

10. "And presently a great, round, red face bobbed up in front of the nest, with a pair of huge, staring eyes, a very large beak, and below that a wide mouth, with two rows of bones that looked as if they could grind us all to pieces in an instant."

11. "Over the top of this round face and down the sides hung something black, but not like feathers. When the two staring eyes had looked at us for some time the whole thing disappeared."

12. "I cannot tell at all from what you say what this thing could be," said the mother, "but perhaps it may come again."

"Oh, I hope not!" said Flapsy. "I shall die from fear if it does."

13. "Why so, my love?" said her mother. "Has it done you any harm?"

"I cannot say it has," replied Pecksy.

“ Well, then it is very silly of you to be afraid of it. You must try to conquer your foolish fears.

14. “ When you go out into the world you will see a great many strange things. If you are in terror of everything that you have never seen before you will live a most unhappy life. But here comes your father, perhaps he will be able to tell us what it was that frightened you so much while I was out.”

Questions: 1. What did Fred wish to find out? 2. What did his mother tell him to do if he found the robins' nest? 3. What did Harriet say about taking birds' nests? 4. When the mother robin came home what did she ask her nestlings? 5. What did Robin say that they had seen? 6. How did Robin describe the monster?

## 12. THE BRAVE FATHER

1. As soon as the father bird had given the worm to Robin he was getting ready to go for another, but, to his surprise, they all begged him to stay. “ We would rather go without our dinner,” they cried. “ Please, father, stay at home and take care of us.”

2. “ Stay at home and take care of you!” said he. “ What must I do that for?”

The mother then told him of the monster

which had frightened the children so much that they did not like to be left alone.

3. "Nonsense!" said he. "A monster! Great eyes! long beak! I don't understand such stuff. Besides, it did them no harm. Why are they in such a fright now that it is gone?"

"Don't be angry, dear father," said Pecksy, "for it was very frightful indeed."

4. "Well," said he, "I will fly all round the orchard, and perhaps I may meet this monster."

"Oh, it will eat you up, it will eat you up," said Flapsy.

"Never fear," said he, and away he flew.

5. The mother then tried to calm them, but they were now in great fear for the safety of their father. However, to their great joy, he soon came back.

"Well," said he, "I have seen this monster."

The little ones clung to their mother, fearing the dreadful creature was there.

6. "What, afraid again?" cried he. "Surely I must have a pack of little cowards in my nest? Why, when you fly about the world you will see hundreds of such monsters, as you call them.

7. "You are sure to meet plenty of these creatures, and some of them of the most mischievous kind."

"I begin to understand what you mean," said



the mother robin. "You think that these darlings have seen the face of a man."

"Just so," replied her mate.

8. "They have seen a man, no other than our friend the gardener. It is he who has frightened them so much."

"A man!" cried Dicky. "Was that frightful thing a man?"

"Nothing more, I can tell you," said his father; "and a good man, too, I believe."

9. "He is very careful not to frighten your mother and me when we are picking up worms, and he has often thrown crumbs to us when he is eating his breakfast."

"And does he live in this garden?" said Flapsy.

10. "He works here very often," replied her father; "but he is not here always."

"Oh, then, do not let us go out while he is in the garden," cried she, "for I cannot bear to see him."

11. "You are a silly little bird," said her father, "and if you do not try to be braver I shall have to leave you in the nest by yourself while I am teaching your brothers and sisters to fly and peck."

12. "And what will you do then? For you must not expect us to bring you food after you are old enough to find it for yourself."

Flapsy said that she would try not to be so much afraid, and the rest of the little birds were soon in good spirits again.

13. But they could not help peeping over the edge of the nest with beating hearts when they heard a sound near the ivy wall. They feared that the dreadful round face would show itself again.

Questions: 1. What did the nestlings beg their father to do? 2. What did the father robin see when he flew round the orchard? 3. What was it that the young ones had seen? 4. What kind of man was the gardener? 5. What did Flapsy say to her father about the gardener? 6. What did he reply to her?

### 13. JOE FINDS THE NEST.

1. While this terrible fuss was going on in the nest, the monster, who was no other than honest Joe, the gardener, went to the house to ask for the young master and mistress. He felt that he had pleasant news to tell them.

2. Harriet and Fred both ran out. "Well, Joe," said Harriet, "what have you got to say to us? Have you got a peach or a plum, or have you brought me a root of sweet-william, as I asked you to do?"

3. "No, Miss Harriet," said Joe, "but I have something to tell you that will please you as much."

“What’s that, what’s that?” said Fred.

“Why, Master Fred, a pair of robins have come very often to one place in the orchard lately.

4. “So, thought I, these birds have got a nest. I watched and watched, and at last I saw the old hen fly into a hole in the ivy wall. I had a fancy to look in, but, as master told me never to frighten the birds, I stayed till the old one flew out again.

5. “And then I mounted, and there I saw the little creatures full fledged; and if you and Miss Harriet may go with me I will show them to you, for you may easily get up the step-ladder.” Fred was in raptures.

6. He ran off at once with the gardener, and Harriet was not slow to follow. When the red-breasts had quieted the fears of their young family, and fed them as usual, they went away to a tree.

7. But they took care to tell their little nestlings not to be frightened if the same monster were to look in at them again, as it was very likely that he would do so. They promised to bear the sight as well as they could.

8. When the old birds were seated in the tree the father said to the mother, “It is high time that we taught our young ones to fly. If we do not teach them to go out into the world and face

danger they will never be able to shift for themselves."

9. "Very true," said the mother. "They are now fully fledged, and therefore if you like we will take them out to-morrow and begin to prepare them for getting their own living."

10. "One of the best ways to begin will be to leave them by themselves for a while," said the father bird. "Let us go for a little flying trip together, and then go back."

11. The mother agreed, but she longed to go back to her little ones at once. When they stopped to rest on a tree she said: "I can remember how, last year, I was robbed of my darlings by some cruel boys."

12. "It is that which makes you so nervous at leaving the nest now, perhaps," said her mate. "I can see that you keep looking that way, and seem as if you would like to be flying home."

13. "Yes, I never feel comfortable away from them," said she.

"I once had a trouble of the same kind before I married you," said the father robin, "and I shall never forget it either.

14. "I had been taking a flight in the woods to fetch some nice bits for my nestlings. When I came back the first thing that put me into a fright about them was seeing a part of the nest

on the ground. I had not been prudent in the place I chose.

15. "I am older and wiser now, but at that time I built too near the ground, and the nest was not safe. The next thing I saw was a large hole in the wall, where before there had only been a small one, just wide enough to let me go in and out."

Questions. 1. What news did Joe bring to the house? 2. What did he say that his master had told him? 3. What did the robin and his mate do after quieting the fears of the nestlings? 4. What did the robin say to his mate in the tree? 5. What reason did she give for being afraid to leave her nestlings? 6. What was the first thing that her mate saw on coming back to the spot where he had built?

#### 14. ROBIN REDBREAST'S STORY.

1. The robin went on telling his mate the story of how he lost his nest. "What did you see next?" said she.

"Why, I stopped outside the hole hardly daring to look in. At first I was in hopes of hearing the chirpings of my nestlings.

2. "But all was silence. At last I made up my mind to go in. But what was my misery when I found that the nest, which my dear mate and I had built for the little ones with so much care and hard toil, had been stolen away!

3. "Worse than this, my dear baby robins were gone too, and I could not see their mother anywhere. I rushed out of the place, full of sorrow and dread, crying aloud, for I could do nothing to help them.

4. "I feared that they were in great trouble, if not dead. But still I hoped that my dear mate might be somewhere near, and I made up my mind never to leave off searching till I found her.

5. "As I was flying along, I saw three boys, who looked very dreadful. One of them held in his hand my nest of young ones, which he eyed with cruel delight, while his comrades seemed as glad as he was.

6. "The dear little creatures, who were too young to know what danger they were in, opened their mouths. Poor little dears! They expected to be fed by me or their mother, but all in vain.

7. "It was of no use trying to feed them while they were in the hands of the boys—that was a thing which no bird is bold enough to try. But I made up my mind to follow the great savage giants.

8. "I wished to see what would become of my darlings. In a short time the party came to a house, and he who had carried the nest before now handed it to another, while he went in and fetched something to give them.



THE ROBIN WATCHING THE BOYS.

9. "He soon came out with a kind of food which I know nothing about, and with this my young ones were fed. Hunger led them to swallow it. But soon, missing the warmth of their mother's breast, they set up a sad cry, which pierced my very heart.

10. "Directly after this, the nest was carried away, and what became of my nestlings I never could find out, though I often flitted round the great house which was their prison with the hope of seeing them."

11. "And," said the mother, "what became of your mate?"

"Why, my dear," said he, "when I found that there was no chance of helping my little ones, I went on looking for her everywhere, but nowhere was she to be seen.

12. "At last I went back to the old bush where the nest had been. Here I saw a sad sight, indeed. My beloved mate lay dying on the ground. I flew to her as fast as I could, and tried to call her back to life by one of my sweetest songs I knew.

13. "At the sound of my voice she lifted up her head and looked at me with a dim eye. 'Are you then safe, my dear mate?' said she. 'Oh, what has become of our little ones?'

14. "To comfort her, I told her I hoped they were alive and well, but she said, 'You have



come too late. I feel I am dying. The horror, when I missed my darlings and thought that you, too, were dead, was too much.

15. ““ Oh, why will men and boys be so cruel and thoughtless ?”

“ With these words she breathed her last, and left me alone in the world. I passed the rest of that summer and the winter in a very unhappy state of mind. The cheerfulness of my nature, however, made me gay and brisk again.

16. “ I settled in the spring to seek a new mate, and had the good fortune to meet with you. And we have been very happy together, have we not ?”

Questions : 1. What did the robin find when he went into the hole ? 2. Whom did he meet carrying the nest ? 3. What did the boys do with the nestlings ? 4. Why did the little ones cry ? 5. What became of the mother robin after her brood was stolen ? 6. What were her last words ?

### 15. GOING TO SEE THE NEST.

1. As soon as Mrs. Benson went back to her children, Fred ran up to her, saying, “ Good news, good news ! Joe has found the robins’ nest.”

“ Has he really ?” said Mrs. Benson.

"Yes, mother," said Harriet, "and we are going with Joe to see it."

2. "But how will you get up?" said her mother, "for I suppose it is above the ground."



HARRIET PEEPS AT THE NEST.

"Oh, I can climb a ladder very well," said Fred, "and so can Harriet."

"Very well. Only be careful not to frighten the poor little things."

3. "Not for all the world," said Fred. Joe and the children soon came to the place where the nest was, and the gardener placed the ladder

for them to mount. Fred ran up it very quickly, and how delighted he was to see the nestlings!

4. "Oh, what dear little things!" said he. "There are four of them. I wish I might carry them all home."

"Oh, no, Fred," said his sister. "Do come away. I am sure that you will frighten the young ones, or else their parents, who are waiting close by."

5. "Well, I will come down in a minute," said Fred; "and so, good-bye, robins." He then clambered down. Joe next turned to Harriet. "Now, miss, will you go up?" said he. Harriet soon climbed the ladder, and was as much pleased as her brother.

6. "They are sweet little dears," said she, "and I hope they will soon join our party of birds, for they seem ready to fly. But let us go home now, that the birds may feed their young ones in peace."

7. As soon as they were all out of sight, the hen bird came back. She had seen the people close to her nest, and thought they had been taking a peep into it. She told her mate of this.

8. He said that he thought the same thing, and that now he expected to hear a fine story from the nestlings.

"Let us go back, in any case," said the mother,

“for perhaps they have been very much frightened again.”

9. “Well,” said he, “I will come, too. But let me advise you not to pay too much heed to their fears,—that will only make matters worse.”

“I will do the best I can,” replied she, and then flew to the nest with her mate.

10. She perched upon the ivy, and, peeping into the nest, asked how they all were.

“Very well, dear mother,” said Robin.

“What!” said the father, who now came down, “all safe? Not one of you eaten up by the monster?”

11. “No, father, we are not gobbled up,” said Dicky, “and yet the monster has been again and has brought two others with him.”

“Two others! What, like himself? I thought, Flapsy, that you were going to die of fright if you saw him again?”

12. “And so I think I should, if you had not told me that he was a good man and would not scrunch me with his teeth,” said Flapsy. “When I saw him my heart began to flutter, and every feather of me shook.”

13. “But when I found that he stayed only a very little while, I got better, and was in hopes he was quite gone. My brothers and sister felt as bad as I did.”

Questions: 1. Why did Harriet take only one peep at the

robins? 2. Why did she wish to go home? 3. Who were looking on while the visit to the nest was paid? 4. What did the mother robin ask her nestlings when she came back? 5. What did they say that they had seen?

## 16. NEW FRIENDS.

1. "Well, and what happened next?" said the mother bird to Flapsy.

"We tried to comfort each other," said Flapsy, "and said that the danger was over. We all said that we should be happy now.

2. "But before we were quite happy again, we heard some very odd noises; sometimes a hoarse sound, horrid to our ears as the croaking of a raven, and sometimes a more shrill noise, quite unlike the note of any bird that we know of.

3. "Just after this, something came in sight which was rather like the monster, but not so large and frightful. Instead of being all over red, it had on each side two reddish spots of a more beautiful hue than father's breast.

4. "The rest of it was of a more delicate white, except two streaks of a deep red like the cherry we saw the other day. And between these two streaks were two rows of white bones.

5. "But they were not at all dreadful to look at, like those of the great monster. Its eyes were blue and white, and round this pretty face was

something which I cannot describe, very lovely, and as smooth as the feathers of a goldfinch.

6. "But it stayed only a very little time. While we were puzzling ourselves about it, there came another, which looked quite as nice, and so mild and gentle that we were charmed with it. But it soon went away too."

7. "I am glad to find you so far from being afraid," said their mother, "for, as your father and I were flying together, on our way back to you, we saw the monster and the two pretty creatures which Flapsy has described.

8. "The first is our friend the gardener. The others are also friends, though they are young. It is these two creatures who put out food for us every day, and I feel sure they will not do you any harm.

9. "Though they are good to a great many birds, I am sure that they like us best."

"Oh," said Pecksy, "are these sweet creatures our friends? I long to go out that I may see them again."

10. "Well," said Flapsy, "I see that we cannot judge of people by their looks. Who would have thought that such an ugly monster as that gardener could have a tender heart?"

11. "Very true, Flapsy," said the mother. "You must make it a rule not to judge of mankind by their looks. I have known plenty who

were just as good to look at as these; yet they were cruel enough to take eggs out of a nest and spoil them.

12. "Not only would they take eggs, but young birds, too, without knowing how to feed them, and without caring how unhappy they made the old birds."

"Oh, how full of danger the world is!" cried Pecksy, "I shall be afraid to leave the nest."

Questions: 1. Whom did the nestlings see besides Joe the gardener? 2. How did Flapsy describe the children? 3. What did the mother say that she had known other children do? 4. What did Pecksy say about the world?

### 17. LUCY AND EDWARD.

1. "Instead of feeling afraid, Flapsy," said her father, "try to be as brave as you can, for to-morrow you shall all begin to see the world."

Dicky jumped for joy at hearing this, and Robin boasted that he had no fear at all.

2. Flapsy, though still rather afraid of monsters, yet longed to see the fun, and Pecksy wished to do what her father and mother liked. As it was now evening, each bird went to sleep with its head under its wing.

3. After Fred and Harriet had seen the

robins' nest, they went back to the house. On their way there they met their mother with Lucy and Edward Jenkins, a fine girl of ten years old and her brother, who was a rather rude strong boy of eleven.

4. "We were coming to look for you, my dears," said Mrs. Benson. "I was afraid that your delight in seeing the robins would make you forget that you had visitors coming."

5. "I would not if I could help it," said Harriet, and she said "how-do-you-do" to her little friend. "Will you come to the play-room?" added she, "I have got some very pretty new things there."

6. "Fred, have you anything to amuse Edward with?"

"Oh, yes," said Fred, "plenty of things; but I would rather go back and show him the robins."

"The robins!" said Edward, "what robins?"

"Why, our robins that have built in the ivy wall. You never saw anything so pretty in your life."

7. "Oh, I can see birds enough at home," said Edward. "But why did you not take the nest? It would have been fine fun. I have found a great many nests this year, and I do believe I have a hundred eggs."

8. "A hundred eggs!" said Harriet, who



turned back on hearing this. "How will you hatch them?"

"Hatch them!" said he, "who ever thinks of hatching birds' eggs?"

"Well, then, what will you do with them?"

9. "I blow out the inside, and run a thread through them, and give them to Lucy to hang up among her treasures, and very pretty they look, I can tell you."

10. "And so," said Harriet, "you would rather see a string of empty egg-shells than hear a sweet concert of birds singing in the trees? I don't admire your taste."

"Why, is there any harm in taking birds' eggs?" said Lucy. "I never heard that there was."

11. "Our mother has taught us to think there is harm in giving pain to any creature," said Harriet, "and it gives pain to birds to be robbed of their eggs. I am very fond of birds," added the little girl.

12. "Well," said Lucy, "for my part I can't say I care much about them. Sometimes I try to rear those which Edward brings home. But they are teasing, troublesome things, and I seldom can rear them.

13. "To tell the truth, I do not trouble myself much about them. If they live they live, and if they die they die. He has brought me three nests to-day, which was a great plague.

14. "I meant to have fed the little birds before I came out. I quite forgot it. Did you feed them, Edward?"

"Not I," said he, "I thought you would do it. It is enough bother for me to find the nests."

15. "This is horrible," said Harriet. "Do you mean that you have really left three nests of birds at home unfed?"

"I did not think of them, but will feed them when we go back," said Lucy.

16. "Oh," cried Harriet, "I cannot bear to think of what the poor little things must have to bear!"

"Well," said Edward Jenkins, "since you feel so much for them, Harriet, I think that you will make the best nurse."

17. "What do you say, Lucy? Will you give the nests to her?"

"With all my heart," replied his sister, "and please do not bother me with any more of them."

Questions: 1. What did the father robin tell Flapsy? 2. Who did the children meet on their way to the house? 3. What did Harriet tell Edward that she did not admire? 4. What had Lucy left at home? 5. What did Harriet think of her leaving the young birds unfed?

## 18. BIRDS ARE NOT PLAYTHINGS.

1. "I do not know whether mother would like me to have the young birds," said Harriet, "but if she will, I should like it." She longed to have them, that she might feed the poor little creatures and let them fly away.

2. She could not enjoy her play, though Mrs. Benson now left them to amuse themselves as much as they pleased. So she went after her mother to ask her leave to have the nests of birds.

3. Mrs. Benson said that she did not at all like the idea of her children keeping young birds. But, as they had already been torn from their home in the fields, and were in distress, she would let Harriet do her best for the poor little things.

4. She guessed why Harriet had asked to take care of the young birds, for she knew that Lucy had no kind mother to tell her what was right, and she said to the little visitor, "I see that Harriet is afraid that you will not be kind to the young birds, Lucy.

5. "I cannot think that you mean to be cruel, but you have made the mistake of thinking that birds may be made into playthings. And if you

had watched birds and loved them as much as I have, you could not look on them as toys.

6. "Though they cannot talk as we do, they can speak to each other in their own way. Each bird has its own note, by means of which it calls its young ones, shows its love for them, and its anger towards those who try to hurt them.

7. "From this we can tell that it is cruel to rob birds of their freedom or steal their young. We cannot give them anything to make up for what we take away when we cage or rob them. Besides, these creatures, small as they are, were, like you, made by God."

8. Tears came into the eyes of Lucy at these words, on which Mrs. Benson took her kindly by the hand, and said, "I did not mean to distress you, my dear, but only to show you the right way of thinking about innocent creatures.

9. "I know that you have a good heart. When you have thought over what I said, you will know that I am your friend in saying it. I knew your dear mother, and can tell you that no one was more tender and gentle than she.

10. "But you had better go and play now. You cannot fetch the young birds to-night, because it is too late for you to go so far. But I am sure that Lucy will feed them when she reaches home."



THE FREE SKYLARK'S SONG.

11. Harriet now went back with Lucy to their brothers, and found Fred in trouble, because Edward was teasing the cat by setting Harriet's dog at her. It was very difficult to make him leave off.

12. "Dear me," said he, when Harriet told him she would not have it, "if ever I came into such a house in my life! There is no fun here. What would you say to Harry Pritchard's father, who goes out hunting three times a week?"

13. Edward then began to tell the girls of how the fox had been torn in pieces by dogs outside his father's garden, till his sister said, "Please, Edward, find something else to tell us, for I do not like such cruel stories.

14. "And you know that father told you how a boy was put in prison for chasing a cat. Whether it is a boy who hunts a cat to death, or a man who hunts a fox, I hate hearing about it."

Questions 1. Why did Harriet wish to have the young birds? 2. What did her mother answer when Harriet asked to have them? 3. What did Mrs. Benson say about the notes of birds? 4. What sort of woman had Lucy's mother been? 5. What had become of her? 6. What did Lucy say about a boy who hunted a cat?

### 19. A CRUEL BOY.

1. But Edward, who wished to tease the rest, would keep on telling them of cruel things which

he had done. And when Lucy begged him to be quiet, he said, "What, are you growing tender-hearted all at once?"

2. "I will tell you what I think when we go home," said Lucy. As for poor little Fred, he could not help crying at some of the tales Edward told. But Edward only laughed at his trouble.

3. At last little Fred went crying to his mother, and the little girls went to another room, so the cruel young monster was left to himself, and was forced to pass the rest of the day alone and disliked by everybody.

4. Mrs. Benson said, too, that she should tell Edward's father of the things his son did. "It will be better for him to be punished now," said she, "than to grow up in such a way. Cruel boys make cruel men."

5. When the servant came to fetch Edward and his sister in the evening, Harriet begged Lucy to be sure and feed the birds rightly till she could fetch them, and this Lucy promised to do.

6. Harriet soon went into the drawing-room to see her mother's friends. "I used to think that the lower animals could not think at all," said one lady, "but the sight of this learned pig has changed my ideas, and now I do not know what to think."

7. They then began to talk about the cleverness of animals. As soon as the guests were gone, Harriet said, "Mother, what did the learned pig do? I had a great mind to ask Mrs. Franks, who said she saw him, but I did not like to."

8. "It is a pity that you did not," said her mother, "she would have been glad to tell you. This pig was shown for sight in a room set apart for the purpose, and a great many people went to see him.

9. "Two alphabets of large letters on thick paper were placed on the floor. One of the people in the room was then asked to name a word which he wished the pig to spell. The creature then picked out the letters with his snout and put them together into the word.

10. "He was then asked what o'clock it was, and one of the people held out a watch to him. This he seemed to look at with his cunning little eye, and then he picked out figures for the hour and the minutes.

11. "He did a number of other tricks of the same kind, all of which amused the folk very much. For my own part, though I was in London at the time, and was always hearing of this wonderful pig, I never went to see him.

12. "It would have given me pain to watch these tricks, because I thought that cruelty must



have been used in teaching them. And I would rather watch any creature doing what it is its nature to do than see it perform foolish pranks.

13. "The ways of a creature are wonderful and worth watching when it is left to itself, but the tricks taught it by men are not worth looking at, are often cruel, and make the creature stupid."

- Questions: 1 How did Edward spend the rest of the day? 2. Whom did Mrs. Benson say that she should tell of Edward's cruelty? 3. Of what did Harriet hear her mother's friends talking? 4. Had Mrs Benson been to see the learned pig? 5. Why did she not wish to see him?

## 20. THE LEARNED PIG.

1. "And do you think," said Harriet, "that the pig knew the letters and could spell the words?" "I think, dear, that the pig might have been taught to know the letter, by sight so as to tell one from another.

2. "I suppose that his keeper had some private sign by which he told the pig which letter was wanted. But that the pig had any idea of spelling I cannot believe.

3. "Animals cannot learn the things which boys and girls can, though they do many wise and skilful things in their own way. We cannot

change the nature of an animal, though we may by patience and kindness educate it.

4. "While it is useful and right to make animals our helpers and friends, and to teach them to work, as well as to be sensible and friendly, it is wrong to force animals to do the ugly, useless, and foolish tricks which are to be seen in shows.

5. "It is a waste of your money to pay for these sights, and the people who keep these shows do not care how cruel they are to their animals so long as money is earned by them. Poor, helpless things!

6. "But you had better go to bed now. Good night."

Early in the morning, the mother redbreast waked her young brood. "Come, my little ones," said she, "wake up, remember that to-day you are to go for the first time into the wide world.

7. "Mind that you all shake out your feathers and make them tidy with your beaks as I showed you."

The father bird was on the wing very early that he might give each one of his young ones a breakfast before they left the nest.

8. When he had fed them, he asked his mate to come with him, as usual, to Mr. Benson's, where he found the window open, and his young

friends sitting with their mother. Crumbs had been strewn in plenty before the window, as usual.

9. But the redbreasts took up their usual post on the breakfast-table, where the father bird sang his morning song. After this they went back at full speed to the nest. They could not be absent long that day, as so great a piece of work was before them.

10. Fred and Harriet could not spare so much time to look at them either, for they were in a hurry to go and fetch the birds from the house in which Edward and Lucy lived.

11. As soon as breakfast was over, they set out for their long walk. Fred carried a basket large enough to hold two nests, and Harriet a smaller one for the other.

12. On one side were cornfields and on the other a wood. In such a lovely place as this one would expect to find many birds. But to the surprise of Harriet they saw a very few only.

13. And the few straggling birds which they did see, flew away the moment that they saw her and her brother. Harriet said to Fred that she supposed the birds were so timid because Edward Jenkins was always taking their nests.

14. She went on to tell her little brother how shocked she had been at the stories Edward had told them the day before. Fred promised to

remember, and hoped that he should never make his mother ashamed to hear of what he had done when he grew older.

15. They walked through the front garden, and saw that it was empty of birds. No sweet songs came from the trees, it was all lonely and sad.

Questions · 1. What did Mrs. Benson advise Harriet? 2. What did the mother robin tell her little ones to do the next morning? 3. Where did Harriet and Fred go that day? 4. What sort of place was Mr. Jenkins' ? 5. What did the children notice as they drew near? 6. What reason did Harriet give for the small number and timidity of the birds?

## 21. A JOURNEY FOR THE NESTS.

1. As soon as they came up to the house, Lucy Jenkins ran out to meet them, but her brother was gone to school. "We are come to fetch the birds, Lucy," said Harriet.

2. "Oh, I don't know what you will say to me, I am sure," said Lucy. "I have very bad news to tell you, and I fear you will blame me very much. But you cannot blame me more than I blame myself.

3. "I do so wish that I had come home at once after what your mother said to me; that is what I ought to have done, but I did not think

of it at the time. She showed me how cruel I had been, yet I felt ashamed just then to own it.

4. "I walked as fast as I could all the way home, and made up my mind to give each of the little creatures a good supper. For this I had an egg boiled and nicely chopped. I mixed up some bread and water very smooth, and put a little seed with the chopped egg.

5. "Then I carried it to the room where I left the nests. - But oh, how sorry I was to find that it was all too late! It was of no use to be careful now, for the birds were nearly all dead.

6. "Every sparrow was dead, and in the nest of linnets I found one dead, two dying, and the other almost as bad, but just able to swallow. To him I at once gave some of the food, and he soon held up his head again.

7. "And as I thought he would suffer cold by being in the nest by himself after I had taken out his dead brothers and sisters, I covered him with wool. This morning he is well; I am so pleased!"

8. "What! all the sparrows and three linnets dead?" said little Fred, whose eyes filled with tears. "and have you starved the blackbirds, too?"

"I am afraid some of them are dead," said Lucy, hanging her head, for she was full of shame.

9. "Yet there are two fine ones alive, which I shall give to Harriet. And I hope that she will be able to save them till they grow up, and she will be rewarded by hearing them sing."

10. "Let me see the birds first," said Fred. "So you shall," said Lucy. And they went to the room in which she kept them. Lucy then fed the birds, and told the children how she had made the stuff which she gave them.

11. Lucy then took her young friends into the room where her governess sat, as her mother was dead. This lady spoke kindly to the children, and gave each of them a piece of cake and some fruit. After this Lucy led them again into the room where the birds were.

12. Lucy then very carefully put the nest with the poor lonely linnet into one basket, and that with the blackbirds into the other. Fred wished very much to carry the blackbirds, so his sister handed that basket to him.

13. All the way back Harriet could not help thinking what a pity it was that the nests had been stolen from the places where the faithful parent birds had built them. What pain they must be feeling at the loss of their little ones.

14. And, though Harriet meant to feed the poor nestlings as well as she could, she knew that she could not find the right food for them.

"How should I like it myself," thought she,

“if some strange nasty stuff were were given me to eat?”

15. “Supposing that a giant carried Fred and me off to his den, and fed us on his own horrid food! I am sure we should both feel very ill, and most likely die. And what would our father and mother do?”

16. “I am sure that if Edward thought about it, he would leave off taking the nests of birds. But I daresay he thinks nothing about it. When he is older, perhaps, he will think more and grow kinder.”

Questions · 1. What did Lucy find when she reached home the night before? 2 How many of the little birds were left? 3. Who carried home the blackbirds? 4 What did she hope that he would leave off doing? 5. What was Harriet thinking all the way home?

## 22. LEARNING TO FLY.

1. We must now take a peep at the red-breasts. As the father came into the nest he cried out in a cheerful voice, “Well, my nestlings, are you all ready?”

“Yes,” they chirped.

2. The mother then bustled up, and told each one of them to climb on to the edge of the nest. Robin and Pecksy sprang up in an instant, but

Dicky and Flapsy, being rather afraid, were not so quick.

3. The hearts of the parent birds were glad at the sight. "Now," said the father, "stretch your wings, Robin; flutter them a little in this way." Then he showed Robin how to begin. "Now, be sure to do just what I tell you.

4. "That is very well," he went on. "Do not try to fly yet, there is not room here, nor air enough. Walk gently after me to the wall, then follow me to the tree that stands close to it.

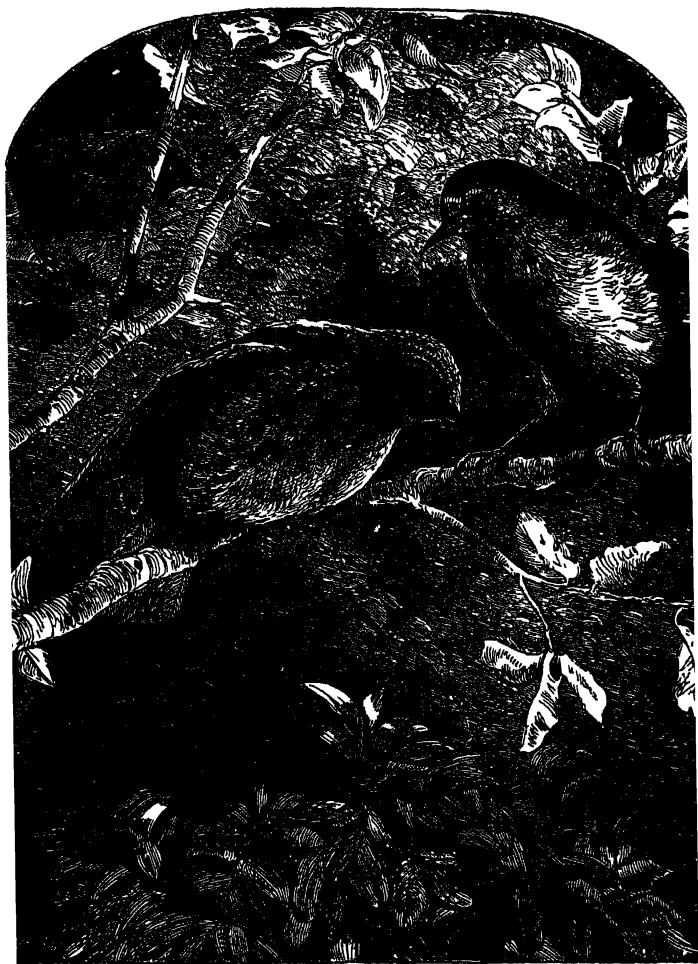
5. "Then you must hop on from branch to branch, as you will see me do. Stop to rest yourself now and then. And, as soon as you see me fly, spread your wings and use all the strength you have to follow me."

6. Robin did all that his father told him so well, that he met with great success in his first flight. He was soon perched safely on the ground. "Now, stand still," said the father, "till the rest join us."

7. Then, going back, he called Dicky to do the same as his brother had done. But Dicky was very much afraid of fluttering his wings. He was a timid little fellow, and said he was sure he should fall.

8. They were too high from the ground, Dicky thought. His father, who was a very





LEARNING TO FLY.

brave bird, could not bear to think that any son of his should be a coward. "Why, you foolish little thing," said he, "do you mean to stay in the nest and starve?"

9. "I shall leave off bringing you food, I can tell you. Do you think that your wings were given you to be always folded by your sides, and that all you have to do in the world is to dress your feathers and make yourself look pretty?"

10. "Without exercise you will soon be ill. And, besides, you have your living to earn. Get up this instant!"

Dicky was startled at his father's anger, and got up.

11. He crept as far as to the end of the branch from which he was to fly, but here he began to tremble from fear. He stood flapping his wings without being able to make up his mind.

12. Twice did the good father bird show him the way to begin, and twice did Dicky fail to follow him. The old bird, finding that Dicky would not venture to fly, went round him while Dicky was not looking.

13. And, waiting till the little bird had once more spread his wings, came suddenly up behind and pushed him off the branch. Dicky, now finding himself in real danger, stretched his wings, and, borne up by the air, he gently went down to the ground.

14. The mother now said she would bring Pecksy and Flapsy, while her mate took care of the two youngsters on the ground. Flapsy said she would much rather not try, but did what her mother told her.

15. And Pecksy, without waiting for a moment, did the same, and found it much easier than she expected. As soon as they felt a little rested after their first attempt at flying, they began to look about them in great surprise.

16. The orchard seemed a world to them. For some time they said nothing, but just gazed around. At last Flapsy cried out, "What a charming place the world is! I never thought it was half so big!"

Questions: 1 Which young robin was the first to fly? 2. How did the father bird make Dicky begin to fly? 3. Who taught Pecksy and Flapsy to fly down? 4. What did Flapsy say about flying? 5. What did Pecksy find after she had tried? 6. What did the orchard seem to the nestlings?

### 23. THE FATHER ROBIN'S LESSON.

1. "And do you suppose that this is the whole world, my dear?" said the mother. "Why, I have not seen anything of the world but a small part myself, and yet I have flown over places a hundred times as big as this orchard."

2. "And, besides that, I have talked with foreign birds who have told me that the countries they came from were so far off that it took them many days and nights to reach this land, though they flew the nearest way, and hardly took any rest."

3. "Come," said the father, "let us be up and doing. We did not leave the nest merely to look about us. Every living creature that comes into the world has something to do in it.

4. "You must not be the only birds to stand idle and look on at what others are doing. We small birds have a very easy task compared with many animals. Horses, for instance, must drag heavy loads; dogs must watch the houses of their masters.

5. "But all that we need to do is to eat and drink, build nests, and take care of our young ones till they are able to look after themselves. All this is both easy and pleasant. But even little birds have their troubles.

6. "Cats and hawks will catch us up if we are not on our guard; but the worst foes we have are those of the human race, though we redbreasts are better off than other birds are. Men and women love robins, and will not hurt them.

7. "At least they must be very hard-hearted indeed if they do, and it is thought a great

shame, because of something which a pair of robins did long ago for a little boy and girl in the woods.

8. "The tale is called 'The Babes in the Wood.' Once upon a time there were two little children whose father and mother were dead. Before dying, their kind father sent for their uncle, who he thought was a good man.

9. "To this uncle he left the two little ones, begging him to take care of them. But the man was wicked. He wished to have the money which the father of these children had left in his care till they grew up.

10. "So this bad man wished to kill the little boy and girl. But he would not do it himself. He paid money to two robbers to take the children into a thick wood and kill them.

11. "The little girl and boy went off quite pleased to ride on horseback with the men. When they got to a dark wood, one of the men took out a sharp knife with which to take their lives.

12. "I do not know exactly what happened next, for the story is rather too long for a robin to remember. But somehow the wicked men began to quarrel and fight. One of them stabbed the other, and hid his body in a ditch.

13. "Then the man who was left alive, and who pitied the children, could not make up his

mind to kill them. He rode away on his horse, promising to come back to them, but he never came.

14. "Night fell, and the unhappy babes wandered in the dark wood without food or shelter. The little boy picked blackberries for his sister, and they lay down hand in hand to go to sleep when they were tired.

15. "The pair of redbreasts, of whom I told you, saw them stretched on the cold ground, and thought at first that they were asleep. But the poor babes were dead, and as the redbreasts could not bury them they fetched leaves in their bills to cover them up.

16. "It was hard work for the robins, but they wished to show their grief and love for the little children. And this is partly why boys and girls love us to this day."

Questions: 1. What did the mother robin say about birds she had met? 2. What did the father robin say were the duties of small birds? 3. In what way did he think that robins were better off than people? 4. What was the name of the story which the robin told his young ones? 5. Where did he say that he heard it?

#### 24. IN SEARCH OF FOOD.

1. The young robins seemed to enjoy this story as much as if they had been little boys and

girls. When it was done, their father said, "But we must not stay here doing nothing. Come, hop after me, and we shall soon find something worth having."

2. "You need not be afraid, it is quite safe here. There is no hawk near, nor is there any cat. And I have never seen any of the human race enter this orchard but the monsters you know and a few others quite as harmless."

3. The father then hopped away, followed by Robin and Dicky, while his mate led her little daughters, Pecksy and Flapsy. The parents taught them to know the most likely places in which to pick up worms, and how to pull them out of the earth.

4. Besides this, they showed their young ones what insects were good for them, but the little robins said they knew this without being told. While all this was going on in the red-breast family, Harriet was walking home with the poor birds in the basket.

5. How much better off were the free robins than these unhappy little things! "Well, Fred," said his sister, "what do you think of birds'-nesting now? Should you like to think you had let those poor little birds die, and made these others wretched?"

6. "No, indeed, I should not," said Fred, "and I think Lucy is a very naughty girl for

starving them." "She was to blame, but she is sorry, so we must not speak unkindly of her.

7. "Besides, you know she has no kind mother as we have to teach her what is right, and her father is often away. Lucy is left to the care of a governess, who perhaps had nobody to teach her when she was young to be tender to animals."

8. They went home through the orchard, where Joe was at work, and asked him to show them the robins' nest again. Just at this time the young robins were all close to the door.

9. They were frightened by hearing the same noises which had filled them with terror before while they were still in the nest. And Robin, who was the foremost, saw to his great surprise that the monsters were near them.

10. Robin, with all his courage, was seized with a terror, for if a view of the faces of these monsters had seemed so dreadful, what was it now to see their full size, and watch them coming, with strides like giants, towards him?

11. He thought that he would at once be crushed to death by the foot of one of them, and he did not know how to get away, for he could not yet raise himself into the air. He, therefore, chirped loudly, and flapped his wings.

12. This noise not only surprised his brothers and sisters, but brought his father and mother to find out the meaning of his cry. Not only



this, but Harriet and Fred heard it, and they stopped to listen.

Questions: 1. What did the parents teach the young robins? 2. What did Harriet ask Fred on the way home? 3. What did he answer? 4. Who opened the gate for the children to go into the orchard? 5. What fright did the young robins have on the other side of the gate? 6. What did Robin do when he could not get away?

### 25. IN THE ORCHARD.

1. "What chirping is that?" said Harriet, on hearing Robin cry.

"It was the cry of a young bird," said the man; "was it not one of those in the basket?"

"No," said Fred; "the noise came that way," pointing to some currant bushes; "my birds are not crying."

2. "And my linnet is very well, too," said Harriet. Fred then set down his charge very carefully, and began looking about, and soon, to his great joy, he found the redbreasts and their little family.

3. He called to his sister, who was quite as much pleased at the sight. Robin, as soon as Fred's face was near his own beak, remembered who he was, and, calling to his brothers and sisters, told them that they need not be afraid of him.

4. Harriet did the same, and the little flock was pleased at the sight of her kind face. Fred found a bit of biscuit in his pocket, which they crumbled up and scattered; and they left the redbreasts picking them up.

5. When the birds had shared the crumbs among them they felt thirsty. So they began to look about for some moister food. Dicky was so lucky as to find four worms all at once, but instead of calling the others to have a share he ate them all himself.

6. "Are you not ashamed, you little greedy creature?" said his father, who saw him gobbling the last worm in a great hurry for fear anyone else should see him; "what would you think of your mother and me if we were to treat you so?"

7. "By the time that you are a father, Dicky, yourself, which will be next year, you will have to learn how to deny yourself. You had better begin now, and let your brothers and sisters have a bit of the next worm you find."

8. Dicky looked much ashamed, but hopped away to look for more worms. Perhaps he thought that it would be time enough to give up his dinner when he had young ones of his own.

9. Young robins cannot learn to give up pleasure for the sake of other people, as we



ARE YOU NOT ASHAMED OF YOURSELF ?

ought to do. Yet they are most unselfish towards their children, feeding them before themselves.

10. In the meantime, Robin and Pecksy were tugging at two ends of the same worm, when, just as Robin had jerked away the biggest share, a sparrow snatched it from him, and flew away with it for his young ones.

11. Furious with rage, Robin begged his father to fly after the sparrow and tear his heart out.

“That would be taking a violent revenge, indeed,” said his father. “No, Robin, the sparrow had as good a right to the worm as you.

12. “Most likely he has a great many little gaping mouths to fill at home, and he thought that his hungry children wanted it more than such plump little birds as you and Pecksy.

13. At this instant Robin saw Pecksy with a fine spider in her mouth, and tried to snatch it from her. But she was too quick for him, and had it down her throat in a minute.

Questions: 1. What did Robin tell his brothers and sisters as soon as he saw Fred? 2. What did Fred find for the red-breasts? 3. What did Dicky find and eat? 4. What is it that we ought to do but which robins cannot learn? 5. What did the sparrow do? 6. What did Pecksy find for herself?

## 26. ROBIN'S ATTEMPT TO FLY WITHOUT HELP.

1. The eyes of the mother sparkled with delight at seeing her little brood so well able to take care of themselves. Yet she saw that the time had come for them to leave off living together, as they had done in the nest.

2. "They will do nothing but quarrel and fight," she said, "unless they part."

"This seems sad, my dear," said her mate. "But do not let it grieve you. It would never do for our young birds to go on living together always, for then they would not build nests and rear young.

3. "The best thing we can do is to teach them all how to fly, and then they need no longer keep so near each other. They will be all the better friends for being sometimes apart."

4. The mother bird now said that she thought they had better take the little ones back to the nest soon, at least for that night. "If they get too tired, they will not be able to get there," she said.

"That is true," said her mate.

5. "Try what you can to get them together, and as there is no need to fear any danger here we will see what they can do."

She did as he asked, and when her brood had rested a little, she got up, on which all the little ones instantly raised themselves on their feet.

6. "Now, Robin," said his father, "let us see you try to fly upwards: come, I will show you how to raise yourself."

"Oh, don't trouble about me," said this foolish young bird, "as I flew down, there is no reason why I should not be able to fly up."

7. Then, spreading his wings, he tried to rise into the air, but in so unskilful a way that he only shuffled along the ground.

"That will not do at all," cried his father, "shall I show you now?"

8. Robin kept to his first notion, that he needed no teaching, and tried again. He just managed to raise himself a little way from the ground, but soon came tumbling headlong down again.

9. His mother began to scold him for being so silly, and advised him to ask his father to teach him. "To blunder in this way because you are too proud to learn will only make sensible birds laugh at you."

10. "Let him alone, let him alone," said his father, "if he is above being taught, he may find his own way to the nest. Come, Dicky, let us see what you can do at flying upwards. You cut a noble figure this morning when you flew down."

11. Dicky was not in a great hurry to try. He came forward slowly, and then hung back. At last he said he did not see why they need go back at all. He should think that they might find some snug corner to creep into.

12. "Why, you are as absurd as Robin," said his father. "He is too bold, and you are too timid. If you rest on the ground all night, you will suffer from cold and damp.

13. "Besides which there are rats, owls, and other creatures, too, which go out by night to seek for food, and which would enjoy a fat young bird like you, and snap you up in a moment while you are asleep.

Questions: 1. What did the mother robin wish to do with her brood at night? 2. What was Robin's father anxious to teach him? 3. What did Robin answer when his father offered to show him how to fly? 4. What did the mother say to Robin? 5. Which of the young birds did he wish to teach next?

## 27. RETURNING TO THE NEST.

1. Dicky began to think that he would be wise to obey his father, and said he would try to fly up.

"Never despair," said the old robin, "you will not be the first young robin who has learnt to fly after thinking he never could.

2. "Just look up into the air and see how many birds are flying about. They were once all nestlings like yourself. I wonder whether they said, 'Oh, I can't,' when their fathers wanted them to fly?"

3. "See that new-fledged wren, it only left the nest yesterday, and yet how bravely it skims along! Do not let it be said that a redbreast lies grovelling on the earth, afraid to fly, while a little baby wren soars above him."

4. Dicky now felt ashamed of himself. So, without more delay, he spread his wings and tail. His father stood near, showing him the right way, and, raising himself from the ground, went on in front to guide him.

5. By carefully watching his father and doing everything that he saw him do, Dicky reached the nest in safety. He found it a most comfortable resting place after the tiring journeys of the day.

6. The mother went to Flapsy and said, "Get ready to follow me when your father comes back, for the sun is very scorching here, and the nest will be more comfortable and cool in the shade of the ivy."

7. She asked her mother to tell her all she had better do. "Well, then," said the kind old bird, "first bend your legs, then spring from the ground as quickly as you can, stretching



your wings as you rise, on each side of your body.

8. " Shake them with a quick motion, as you will see me do, and the air will yield to you, and at the same time support your weight. The mother bird then rose from the ground.

9. Flapsy having practised two or three times what she had been learning, at length dared to follow her, though with a beating heart. She was soon happily seated in the nest by the side of Dicky.

10. The mother bird now went back to Pecksy, who was waiting for her; she was quite ready to go. She sprang from the ground with a lightness and strength which were wonderful for a first attempt.

11. The faithful mother could not rest while Robin was still on the ground, and so she sat in a tree close by, where she could keep an eye on him, and be ready to help him if he asked her.

12. But Robin sat sulky, and would not own that he was in the wrong. He would not humble himself to ask help from his father or mother, so they left him for a little while. Instead of being sorry when they were gone, Robin grew angry.

13. He gave way to ill-temper. " Why am I to be treated in this way?" cried he. " I am

the eldest of the lot, and all the others are fondled and caressed. But I don't care, I can get to the nest well enough if I choose, only I don't choose."

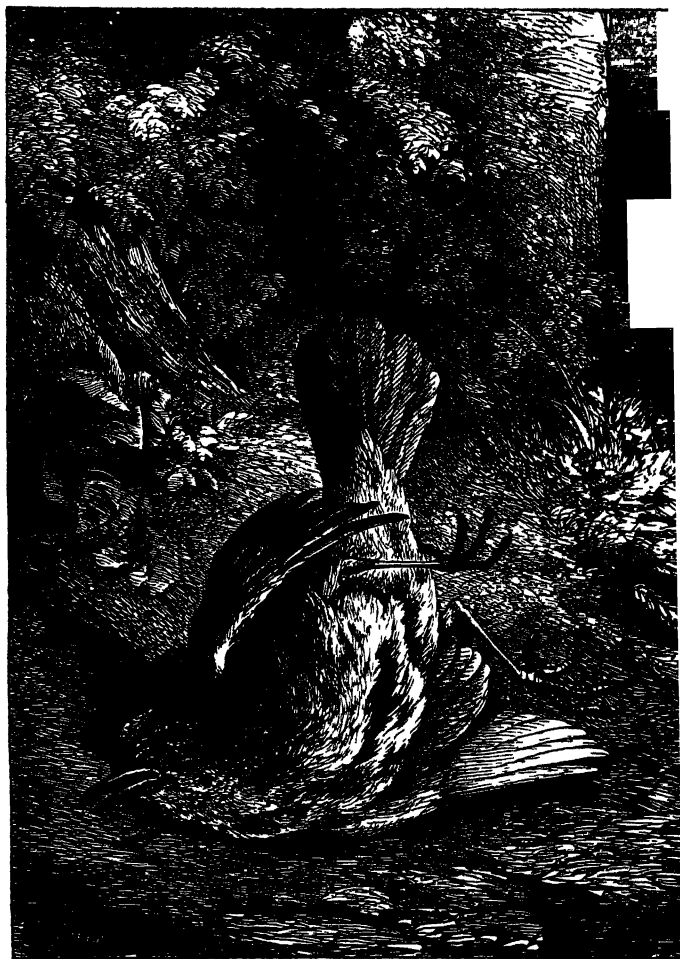
Questions: 1. What did the old robin say to encourage Dicky? 2. What little bird did Dicky see flying so well? 3. What did the mother tell Flapsy to do when she wished to fly? 4. Why did the mother stay on the tree instead of going into the nest? 5. What kind of temper was Robin in?

### 28 ROBIN HAS A TUMBLE.

1. At last Robin began to get very tired of being all alone on the ground. It was getting dark, too, and he began to think of what he had heard his father tell Dicky about cats and other night creatures who snapped up fat little birds.

2. He made a desperate effort to fly up, and after a great many trials did get up into the air. But as he did not in the least know how to guide himself, he turned sometimes to the right, sometimes to the left.

3. At length, quite tired out, he fell and bruised himself a good deal. Stunned by the fall, he lay for some time as if dead. And then, as soon as his senses came back, he was in terror at finding himself alone in this dismal state.



ROBIN STUNNED BY HIS FALL.

4. The horrors of loneliness and coming darkness now filled him with bitter feelings. "Oh," cried he, "if I had only done what my father and mother told me! Then I should have been safe and snug in the nest.

5. "But now I am the most wretched of young birds. Where shall I find shelter for the night which is fast coming on? Who will give me any supper, for I want something to eat?

6. "Oh, my dear father and mother, if you would only come and pop something into my mouth, and show me the way home, how glad I should be!"

And Robin's kind parents were not far off. They had watched him and seen his distress.

7. Darting from the branch from which she had seen Robin's fall, the mother stood in an instant before him. "My poor little bird," said she, "I have seen everything. My heart aches for you. And gladly would I help you if I could!

8. "But, alas! I cannot do much for you. It is now too late to see well, and so we shall not be able to get you a good supper. But we must do the best we can. And you must try with all your might to fly, you must not stay where you are."

9. Just at that moment the father came up, and they began to consult together as to a place

of safety into which Robin could flutter or creep for the night, since it was plain that he had hurt himself too much for flying up to the nest.

10. The father robin flew to a meadow close by, and fetched a worm from a place he knew. His son soon gobbled it up and was thankful. Refreshed by this morsel, and comforted by his parents' kindness, Robin was now able to stand up.

11. On shaking his wings he found that he was not so much hurt as he had thought. His head indeed was bruised, and he had a pain in the joint of one wing, so he could not fly at all, but he managed to hop.

12 "I think that for to-night he cannot do better than creep into this hole at the root of the hollow apple tree," said Robin's mother. "What do you think, my dear?"

"Well," said her mate, "I should say that it was a very safe place."

Questions · 1. What misfortune did Robin meet with while trying to fly? 2. Who came to help him? 3. What hurts had Robin received? 4. What meal did his father get for him? 5. What place did they think of as a refuge for Robin?

## 29. HOW ROBIN FARED.

1. Very early the next morning, the mother of Robin went to see him. She found him well, but still unable to fly. He said that he had been terribly frightened in the night.

2. In the tree over his head, just as he had put his poor bruised head under his wing and was dropping asleep, a loud fearful noise began. "It was a little like the noise which the monster made, when first he came to see us in the nest," said Robin.

3. "Nonsense," said the father bird, who now came up, "Joe, the gardener, goes to sleep in his nest all night, and never comes out till the morning. You must have had a bad dream, Robin, because you were such a naughty bird last night."

4. "Indeed, father, it was not a dream. I heard it, and I was awake. It cried out, 'Hoo-hoo-hoo, tu-whit to-who!' " till I was nearly dead from fright. I felt as if something was coming to eat me."

5. "Oh, it said 'Tu-whit, tu-who,' did it?" said the father robin. "Well, then, after all it was not a dream. That great noise was made by a kind of a flying cat, and a most horrid creature she is.

6. "Men call him an owl, and he is quite as bad as a cat for stealing little birds. But if you hear him again, keep quiet, he cannot get you, in here." But Robin said he could not sleep in the hole any more.

7. It made him shake to think of it. So the parents said they would find some safer place for him out of the sound of the owl's voice. His mother was anxious now to see whether Robin could hop.

8. She told Robin to follow her as well as he could. This he did, though not without some pain.

"Now," she said, "amuse yourself by looking for insects and worms in the grass. There are plenty here.

9. "Stay here for the day, and before evening I will come back and settle about a sleeping place for you." Robin took a sorrowful farewell of his mother.

10. She was forced to leave him, because the rest of her brood needed her care, for it was but their second day in the wide world. The little nestlings were very glad to hear that their brother was safe.

11. They asked their father to let them go and keep him company. But he said the journey was too great for such little birds.

Perhaps you may pay him a visit to-mor-

row," said he, "when your wings will be stronger."

12. They kept on saying that they could not be happy without Robin, and from time to time they fancied they heard his cries. Then the father or mother would take wing and just see that he was all right.

"Robin is safe enough," said the mother, "pecking here and there whatever he can meet with."

13. After a time the father of Robin came flying to him, and with a good deal of trouble, managed to get him to a pump in the garden, where the water dripped into a trough.

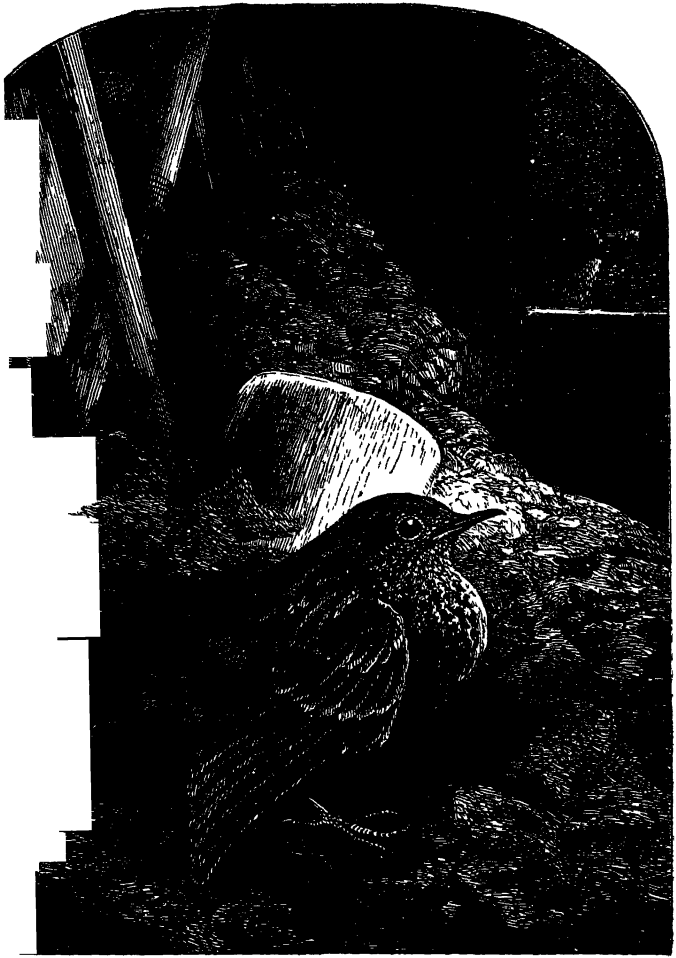
14. Here Robin sipped the fresh drops, and they did him a great deal of good. "Tomorrow you may try to bathe," said the old bird.

Questions: 1. What fright did Robin have in the night? 2. Where did his mother bird take him to pass the day? 3. What did the little ones say about Robin? 4. What did the mother bird do many times in the day? 5. Where did the father red-breast take Robin in the evening?

### 30. IN THE TOOL HOUSE.

1. That night, when bedtime came, the father robin came with his mate to see where their nestling should sleep. "I have thought of





LITTLE ROBIN SAFELY HOUSED.

place," said he, "where at least you will be safe from cold, rats, cats, and owls.

2. "In a part of this orchard, a very little way from here there is a little hut which belongs to our friend Joe. Once or twice I have found shelter in it from a storm, and there is a door which is shut tight as soon as the sun sets.

3. "It is opened again in the morning." The old bird then led the way, and his son followed him. When they came to the tool-house, a place where the gardener kept his spade, they found the door open.

4. His father looked carefully about, and at last he found, in a corner, some scraps of cloth used for nailing up fruit trees.

"Here, Robin," he said, "here is a charming bed for you. Let me see you in it. Then I must bid you good night."

5. So saying, away he flew, while his mate, who had waited outside to see whether she could find an earwig or two, came in to look. She was much pleased with the lodging which he had found.

6. She reminded him that if they stayed any longer they might be shut in for the night and leave their other children alone. So they took leave, telling Robin that they would visit him early in the morning.

7. Though this house was much better than Robin expected, he fretted rather to get back to his little brothers and sisters in the nest. But he soon put his head under his wing and forgot all about it.

8. Before the sun showed his glorious face in the east all the family of robins were awake. The father was in a great hurry for the gardener to open the tool-house; the mother got her little ones ready to go out.

9. "You will be able to get on better to-day, my dears, will you not?"

"Oh, ycs, mother," said Dicky, "I shall not be at all afraid."

"Nor I," said Flapsy.

"That is famous," said their mother. "Then let us see who will be down first."

10. On this, the mother bent her course to the spot where Robin lay hidden, and they all followed her at the same moment, and surprised their father. He had seen Joe, and was expecting every instant that he would open the door.

11. At last, to the joy of the whole party, he drew near. Taking a large key from his pocket, he soon undid the door, for he wished to fetch his shears. Joe left the door of the tool-house open, in case of wanting anything else.

12. So the mother redbreast proposed that

they should all go in and pay Robin a call. There they found him in his snug little bed, and how pleasant the meeting was! They all chirped as loud as they could, which meant "how do you do?"

13. They soon left the tool-house and hopped about the currant bushes. "Those of you who have the full use of your limbs, could manage to get into those low bushes," said their father. "But poor Robin must content himself with the ground a little longer."

Questions: What place did the father redbreast think of for Robin's sleeping place? 2. On what did he sleep? 3. What did the mother robin say to her little ones early next morning? 4. Where did they all go together? 5. Why was the old robin anxious to get out of the tool-shed? 6. How did the young birds make themselves happy all day?

### 31. A FAMILY IN DISTRESS.

1. It is now time to see what Harriet and Fred are doing. They reached home soon after they left the redbreasts, and told all that they had seen and heard to their kind mother.

2. Mrs. Benson told Harriet that she was going to pay a visit in the afternoon, and would take her. The little girl took great care of the birds all day, and Fred promised that he

and the maid would feed them while she was away.

3. After Mrs. Benson and her daughter had paid their visit, they were coming home on foot, when they were met by a poor woman, who begged them to help her. She was in great trouble.

4. She had a sick husband, and seven children who were in a starving state. "If you will come into this barn," she said, "you can see for yourself that what I have told you is the truth."

5. Mrs. Benson, who was always ready to help those who were in distress, took her little daughter by the hand and followed the poor woman to a wretched shed, where she saw the father, with all his helpless children round him.

6. He was no longer able to work for them, and, though he was nearly cured of his illness, he was himself almost ready to die for want of good food.

"How came you all to be in such a state as this, good woman?" said Mrs. Benson.

7. "Oh, my good lady," said the woman, "we have not been used to beg, but to earn an honest living by our hard work. And never till this sad day have I known what it is to ask charity.

8. "This morning for the first time I went to

the road side and begged from those who were passing, but some did not believe my story, and others gave me so little, that I felt myself quite out of heart.

9. "I even made up my mind not to ask again, but the sight of my dear husband and children in this state drove me to it."

"Well, take comfort," said Mrs. Benson, "we will see what we can do; in the meantime, here is something to keep you going."

10. After giving the poor woman a sum of money which caused tears of thankfulness to run down her pale cheeks, Mrs. Benson went on, as she did not wish to hear the thanks which the woman poured out.

11. They spoke of nothing but the poor people till they reached home. Little Fred, who had sat up an hour beyond his time, came out to meet them, and told his sister that the birds were well and fast asleep.

12. "I think," said she, "that it is high time for you to follow the example of the little birds. What do you think, Fred? You look so sleepy that you can hardly keep your eyes open."

13. "Good-night, dears," said their mother, kissing them, "do you know that the young birds will be awake very early indeed? Who is going to feed them the first thing in the morning?"

14. "Cook says she will do it when she gets up at six o'clock," said Fred, "and she says that they will not wake up, nor want food till then, because she has put them in a dark room."

Questions: 1 Where did Mrs. Benson take Harriet? 2. What did they meet as they walked back? 3 What trouble was the poor woman in? 4 What had she been obliged to do that morning? 5 What did Mrs. Benson do for her? 6. Who said that the poor woman was welcome to all her store?

### 32. THE ORPHAN NESTLINGS.

1. The next day, the robins took their morning's flight to the breakfast table, and found the young children with their mother. They had been up a long time, for, after all, Fred had had the young birds in his bedroom.

2. Very early indeed they had waked the little boy and girl by their cries for food, and the children gladly got up to take care of them. The two blackbirds seemed quite well, but the linnet looked rather drooping, and did not eat.

3. As for the blackbirds, they were very hungry; and their young friends, not remembering that, when fed by their parents, young birds wait some time between each morsel, filled their crops so full that they had great lumps on their necks.

4. Soon after the meal, Harriet saw one of them gasping for breath. "Stop! Fred," said she, "the bird is so full he can hold no more." But she spoke too late; the little creature closed his eyes and fell on one side, where he lay still.

5. "Oh, he is dead, he is dead!" cried Fred, in tears.

"He is, indeed," said Harriet, "but I am sure we never thought it would kill him, and it is a comfort to think that we did not take the nest."

6. His mother, hearing him crying, was afraid that he had hurt himself. She came into the room in a great hurry and Harriet told her of what had happened. Mrs. Benson sat down and took Fred on her lap.

7. After she had wiped his eyes and given him a kiss, she said, "I am sorry, my child, for your trouble. But do not distress yourself about what cannot be helped. You see the wrong was done at first in taking these poor little things away from their parents.

8. "You and Harriet did your best for them. The poor little thing is out of its pain now. If you keep on crying, you will forget to feed your flock of birds, which I fancy, by the chirping I heard, are crowding to the window.

9. "Come, let me take away the poor little dead body. It must be buried." Then, leading



Fred by the hand, she went downstairs. While she was speaking, Harriet had been watching the other blackbird, who seemed quite at his ease.

10. She then tried again to feed the linnet, but he would not eat. "I fancy, miss," said her maid, "that he wants air."

"That may be so," replied Harriet, "this room which has been kept shut up all night must feel very close to a bird."

11. So she opened the window, and placed the linnet near it, waiting to see what effect the fresh air would have upon him. She was delighted soon to see the little creature begin to smooth his feathers. His eyes grew bright again.

12. Once more Harriet offered the linnet some food, which he gladly received. Having done all that lay in her power for her little orphans, she went to share with her brother the pleasure of feeding the other birds.

13. When this was done, they went in to breakfast. "I wonder," said Fred, who had dried up his tears, and was eating bread and jam as if he had not a care in the world, "I wonder why the robins have not come down this morning to be fed?"

14. "I suppose that they must have to do, now that their young ones ~~are~~

the nest," said Harriet, but an instant after, both the robins flew in at the open window.

Questions: 1. Where did the orphan birds sleep? 2. What did the children forget in feeding the blackbirds? 3. What did the maid think that the linnet wanted? 4. After feeding the young birds, what did Harriet do? 5. What birds flew in at the open window? 6. What did Fred wish to do after breakfast?

### 33. A HAWK.

1. "As you had rather an idle day yesterday, Fred," said his mother, "I think that Harriet and you must do some lessons before you go out to see the young robins. But when your work is done, you may run into the orchard."

2. The little boy took pains to learn his spelling, and did his reading very well. Harriet did her lessons too, and some needlework. While they were indoors, the robins, who had no lessons to do, were flying about outside.

3. As soon as the old redbreasts left their family to go to Mrs. Benson's, Pecksy and Robin began to talk.

"How are you now, Robin?" said she, kindly.

"Oh, I am much better; but it is a wondrous thing to be alive, for you cannot think what a ~~long~~ time I have spent. With turning about as I

did in the air, I became quite giddy, and could not try to save myself when I began to fall.

5. "You see how my eye is still swollen, and it was much more so at first. My wing is the worst; and it still gives me a good deal of pain when I move it. Just look how it drags on the ground! But it was my own fault."

6. "Well, I suppose we cannot do things without learning," said Pecksy, "and what a lot of things there are for a young bird to learn! I quite dread the day when I must take care of myself, and never go back to the nest again."

7. "Oh, I daresay we shall know how to fly and peck all in good time," said Flapsy, "it is of no use to be afraid. For my part I am longing to see the world. I am sure the birds enjoy a great many pleasures that we know nothing of."

8. Dicky said he very much wished to go out into the world, but felt much afraid of birds of prey. "Only think," said he, "they come down on you out of the sky, and you are dead before you know it!"

9. "Well, that is better than being made to bear pain for a long while," said Robin.

"Besides," said Pecksy, "do you really ~~thi~~ that a hawk would hurt us? I am ~~would not seize such a dear little~~ Dicky."

10. "Well, you see, I suppose the hawk is too hungry to think about whether we look pretty or not," said Dicky. "Do you wait to see whether a spider is pretty or not before you gobble him up?"

11. "To be sure," said Flapsy, "it is no more worse of the hawk to cat us, than for us to swallow spiders."

Just as she had said this, a speck was to be seen in the sky above them. It drew nearer, and to the horror of the whole party, it changed into a large bird.

12. At the sight of him all the little birds felt a great fear, and tried to hide as well as they could among the grass. They could not help screaming. At the same moment the shrieks of many other small birds rang through the orchard.

13. The redbreasts were bold little things, and they soon got the better of their fright and began to look about them. Each young bird wished to see what had become of the rest. And they also peeped up towards the sky to see whether the dreadful foe was gone.

14. How sad they were when they saw him carrying off a bird who had often flitted about the orchard. A few of his feathers fell near the young robins' hiding-place, and they knew them for those of a goldfinch whom they had often seen.



A FIGHT BETWEEN A CHAFFINCH AND A SPARROW. *See p. 120.*

15. "This shows," said Pecksy, "that hawks do not care whether the birds they eat are pretty or not. Nobody is safe, and I shall never be happy any more." And Robin, who could not fly, crept under a currant-bush and hid himself. Pecksy and Flapsy followed him.

Questions: 1. What did the children do before running out to play? 2. What did Pecksy ask Robin? 3. What did he answer? 4. What did Dicky feel much afraid of? 5. What did Robin think worse than being killed by a hawk?

### 34. THIRSTY BIRDS.

1. When the old redbreasts came back, after eating a good breakfast at Mr. Benson's house, they missed their little ones. The mother, who felt very anxious, hunted about till she found Robin under the currant-bush, and asked him what had happened.

2. He told his mother how much they had all been frightened, and said they had made up their minds never to go into any open place again until the butterfly came by and made them forget their sorrows. "That was quite right," said she.

3. While she spoke, Joe was seen coming back with his shears in his hand. "Now you will be safe," said the father bird. "You may be sure

that no hawk will come while the gardener is here.

4. "It will be a good time for me to give you a long lesson in flying, that you may know better how to get away from such birds as hawks if you should chance to meet one when no kind man is near.

5. "First, I will teach you how to turn round suddenly in the air and fly any way you may choose, and then you can practise alone what you have learnt. But first let me show you where to get water, for you must be very thirsty."

6. "No," cried all the little ones, "we are not thirsty, for we have had a great many juicy worms and caterpillars, which have done for food and drink in one. Robin is very quick at finding them."

7. "There are no schoolmasters so good as hunger and thirst for teaching a young bird how to find his own dinner," said the father robin.

8. "I am very glad that Robin and all of you are learning how to fill your own mouths. What would have become of you, Robin, if you had not taken trouble to feed yourself?"

9. "But come along, children, here is water near, and you may as well know the way to it, in case of wanting to drink. Besides, a bath will do you good in the sunshine." He then led

them to the pump from which Joe watered the garden.

10. It was near the tool-house where Robin had slept. Here they stayed for some time, and amused themselves by flicking the water in the shallow trough over their backs with their little wings.

11. The old birds flew up into a tree, when they had done bathing, to dry their feathers, and the father sang one of his best tunes. Sometimes they took short flights to teach their little ones how to do the same thing.

12. They could fly better than they had done the day before, and also they were not so much afraid. In the meantime, they had been obliged to leave Robin by himself, since it was too far yet for him to fly to the pump.

13. But what was their grief when they came back and found that he was gone! They could neither see nor hear him. The gardener, too, was no longer near, and they were afraid that as soon as he had left the spot some cat or rat had taken Robin away and killed him.

Questions · 1. What did the robin say when he saw Joe coming? 2. What did he say were the best schoolmasters for teaching young birds? 3. Where did the young robins amuse themselves? 4. Whom had they been obliged to leave by himself? 5. When the old birds came back to Robin what did they find? 6. What did they think had become of Robin?



## 35. ROBIN LOST

1. In the most anxious way the old birds searched every corner in which they thought that poor Robin might be hidden, and they strained their little voices till they were quite hoarse in calling to him.

2. The tool-house was locked, but if he had been inside he would have called out in reply to the cries. At length, in despair, they went back with heavy hearts to the old nest in the ivy wall. There they all sat, feeling very sorrowful.

3. After a mournful night, the mother left the nest again next morning early, that she might try once more to find her little lost bird. But after spending an hour in looking for him she came back to her mate.

4. "Come," said he, "let us take a flight. If we sit here grieving for ever it will be of no use, for it cannot bring poor little Robin back. If he is dead he will never have pain or hunger any more, and if he is not, the more we fly about the more likely we are to get news of him.

5. "Suppose we go to the great house, and take the little ones with us? They have never been to the window yet, where we have been fed so often. I do not think it will be too far

for them. And perhaps our friends may know something about Robin."

6. All the little ones were very pleased at hearing this, for they had often longed to go with their father and mother to the fine place where so much nice food was to be had without the trouble of finding it. So they set out at once.

7. By the time that the family of robins reached the window, all the other birds had been fed and were gone. "Now," said the father bird, "stop a little; don't be in such a hurry. Behave yourselves properly. Hop only where we hop.

8. "You will be getting into some scrape if you do not take care. Recollect that we are now going into the nest of a human being, in which there are many dangers. Do not meddle with anything, or try to peck any crumbs but those which you see us peck."

9. The father and mother flew in at the window. The little ones, afraid at being left alone outside, soon followed. How delighted Fred was to see them settle on the table!

10. And how glad the little birds themselves were, for a great surprise awaited them. Sitting perched on the edge of the bread-plate, as much at his ease as if he had lived there all his life, sat the lost Robin!

11. The meeting was a happy one for all parties, though all were too busy eating crumbs and scraps to say much. Yet the father sang a few notes of pleasure while in the midst of his feast, and the mother bowed and bobbed, clapped her wings, and touched Robin's beak with her own.

12. The young ones, who had never seen so many good things before, were too busy to talk, but they would have liked to ask Robin how he came there, and how he dared venture in alone.

13. But they were wise robins, and thought that talking could be put off, while meal times could not. So they finished the bits which were given to them, and which were as much as they wanted.

14. Dicky perched on the edge of a honey pot and got himself very sticky, so the mother thought it high time to go.

Questions : 1. Who was lost ? 2. Where did the father robin wish to take the young ones ? 3. What did the robin advise his children to do on reaching the house ? 4. What did the mother bird say ? 5. Whom did they find on the breakfast-table ? 6. Who was much delighted at seeing the young robins ?

### 36. POOR ROBIN CAUGHT.

1. Fred's mother had promised him that when his lessons were done he and his sister

should go into the orchard and see if they could catch a glimpse again of the young robins.

2. When they reached the orchard, the old redbreasts had just taken the others back to the nest, and poor Robin was left to himself, as his parents could do nothing for him. He kept hopping about, and at last got into the middle of the path.

3. Fred spied him some little way off, and cried, "Oh, there is one of them, I declare!" And before his mother had noticed what he was doing, he ran to the place, and clapped his small hand over Robin, delighted that he had caught the young bird.

4. Though Fred did not mean to hurt Robin, he could not help doing so. The wounded wing was not well yet, and the least touch gave him pain. The poor little bird sent forth pitcous cries of fright, too, on which Fred let him go, saying, "I won't hurt you, you poor little thing."

5. Harriet, who saw him catch the bird, ran as fast as she could to prevent him from holding it, and seeing that Robin was lame as he hopped away, made sure that it was her brother who had hurt him.

6. But Fred said he was sure that his wing hung down before Robin was caught. Mrs. Benson said, "Most likly he was lamed by

some accident, and this has prevented the little creature from going to the nest with the others.

7. "If this is the case, it will be kind and good to take care of him. Some cat or rat or other creature may snap him up if we do not protect him."

Fred was delighted to hear her say so, and asked whether he might carry him home.

8. "Yes," said his mother, "if you can be sure of carrying him gently and safely."

"Shall I carry him, ma'am," said Joe, "he can go nicely in my hat, and it will not frighten him so much as being held by a hand?"

9. This was a very good plan, so Fred picked up some handfuls of the soft grass which Joe had mown down, and put them in the bottom of the hat. Then Robin was gently caught again, and placed in the hat.

10. As soon as Robin felt and saw how kindly he was being cared for, he seemed to know that he was among friends, and he left off trying to get away. Sitting gravely in the hat, he peered with his bright eyes at Joe and Fred.

11. That night he spent more happily than any since he had left the nest, for the hat, lined with its soft hay, was like the old home, and Joe lent it to him for a bed. His mistress said she would make him a present of a new hat instead of it.

12. When Fred and Harriet woke the next morning they thought of Robin as well as of the other poor nestlings which had been left in their care. Both the linnet and the blackbird now hopped out of the nest to be fed.

13. This was a great pleasure for the children, who were proud to think that by their care and love the lives of these dear little things had been saved. But their pleasure was soon damped by an unlucky accident.

14. The blackbird being placed by a window which was open, hopped too near the edge. It fell to the ground in the garden, where it was snapped up by a dog and killed in an instant.

15. Most likely the dog thought it was something thrown out to him, for he was a good natured old fellow, and would not have hurt a young bird on purpose.

Questions. 1. What had the mother of Fred promised him? 2. What did he see in the path? 3. When Fred heard Robin cry what did he say? 4. What was the fate of the young blackbird? 5. Who comforted Fred? 6. Where had Robin been taken for the night?

### 37. FIGHT BETWEEN A CHAFFINCH AND A SPARROW.

1. Robin had slept very soundly in Mrs. Benson's room, where she had put him to bed.

for fear that Fred should be tempted to handle the little fellow and perhaps hurt him.

2. Robin was able to use his bad wing a little. Fred was therefore trusted to carry him into the breakfast room, where he was placed on the table. It was there that he met his little brother and sisters each morning.

3. For some time the young redbreasts behaved very well at breakfast, but at length Dicky, who became pert when he was a little more tame, forgot to do as his father told him.

4. He began to hop in a very rude manner; he even jumped into the plate of bread and butter, and having a mind to taste the tea, hopped on the edge of a cup. But he found when he dipped his toes into it that the tea was too hot, and he went off in a fine flurry.

5. Flapsy made so bold, too, as to peck at the sugar; but, finding it too hard for her beak, went to the butter dish instead. Her mother told them she would not bring them with her next time if they did not mind their manners.

6. As soon as the servants came to take away the cloth, all the robins hurried out at the window again, after saying good-bye to Robin.

“You have not yet seen half the orchard,” said their father, “and I wish to let you know a few of our neighbours.”

7. He then led the way to a pear tree in which a linnet had built her nest. The old linnets seemed much pleased to see their friends the redbreasts.

8. With great pride the old redbreasts showed their family. "My own nestlings are just ready to fly," said the hen-linnet, "and I hope they will know each other. Birds like your young ones will make nice playmates for mine."

9. Then they flew on to a cherry tree, in which a pair of chaffinches in a great fright were trying to part one of their own brood and a young sparrow, who were squabbling and fighting about nothing.

10. "It is all the fault of my nestling," said the chaffinch, "he will go about with the sparrows, who don't want him. If he would stay at home, he would not always be getting into trouble." Here she pounced down on the young sparrow and sent him flying.

11. "As soon as he began to peck, he would go with sparrows instead of staying at home," went on his mother, panting after her attack on the sparrow. "He made friends with that very young bird you saw him fighting with, who is bad company for him."

12. "The two went about quarrelling and fighting with every bird they met, and now they have picked a quarrel between themselves. I



am heartily glad of it, for now they will not go about together any more." The young linnet, who had received a sharp nip in the wing, said that he should now mind what his mother said.

Questions : 1. How did Robin find himself in the morning? 2. Where was he carried by Fred? 3. How did the young robins now behave at the breakfast-table? 4. What did Mrs. Benson say about the birdeage? 5. What birds were fighting in the cherry tree? 6. What was the end of the fight?

### 38. THE MAGPIES.

1. "Let this be a warning to you, my dears," said the mother robin. "Never go about with any quarrelsome birds, or you do not know what trouble you may get into. Let us take another flight now."

2. The robins began pecking about, when, all of a sudden, they heard a strange noise which frightened the little ones. Their father told them that they need not mind it, and he led them to the top of a high tree.

3. In this there was a nest of magpies, who had been round the orchard to see what sort of place it was, and were now chattering about it. They all spoke at once and made such a clamour that nobody could tell what they were talking about.

4. In short, each magpie wished to speak, and

no magpie wished to listen. "What a foolish set of young birds these are!" said the father-robin. "Mind you speak one at a time, and do not be so silly as the magpies."

5. They soon saw a cuckoo surrounded by a number of smaller birds who had been pecking at her. But all she said was "Cuckoo, cuckoo," as loud as she could. "Get back to your own country," said a thrush, "what business have you here?"

6. "She has been dropping her eggs into our nests," cried the other little birds, "why cannot she build a nest for herself? Yah! get out, go home!" And they flew after the cuckoo till they fairly jostled her out of the orchard.

7. "What I like to see is a swallow," said the robin. "He comes here and builds his nest in an honest way and helps to eat flies as we do. Besides, the swallows can tell splendid tales. I like to hear them speak of what they have seen.

8. "But come, let us go on." They soon came to a hollow tree. "Peep into this hole," said the father to his young ones. They did so, and spied a nest of young owls. "What funny creatures," said Dicky, "they seem to be all eyes and beak."

9. "And how they are muffled up!" said Flapsy, "what can they do in hot weather, dressed so warmly?"



THE MAGPIES AND THEIR NEST.

“What do we do?” said one of the young owls, “why, have you not sense enough to know that we are night birds and do not fly about by day?”

10. At that instant the parent owl came back, and seeing a lot of strangers looking into her nest, she set up a screeching which made the place ring again. This loud cry of anger soon scattered the robins, who took wing as fast as they could.

11. As soon as they stopped to rest, the cock-redbreast, who was really frightened, as well as his mate and family, plucked up his courage. “We have had a narrow escape,” said he.

12. “Why has the owl such big eyes, father?” asked Dicky.

“The better to see you with, my dear,” said his father, “and he has a big beak on purpose to gobble up little birds. So never go near an owl if you can help it, by day or by night. He is as bad as a hawk.

13. “In the daytime, if you chance to see him abroad, he is not so dangerous. But let no little bird dare to stay up late at night after his mother has told him to go to bed. If he does, most likely the big owl will eat him up before he has time to cry out.”

Questions: 1. What birds did the robins hear chattering?

2. What did the thrush say to the cuckoo? 3. What birds were in the hollow tree? 4. When the old owl came home what did the robins do? 5. What did the father robin tell his young ones about staying up late?

### 39. THE POOR WOMAN.

1. Just as Mrs. Benson and her children were getting ready to go out, after watching the happy meeting of the redbreast family at their table, the servant came to the door and told them that a poor woman was at the gate.

2. Mrs. Benson said she might come up. "Well, good woman," said the kind lady, "how is your husband now?"

"Thanks to your goodness, ma'am, and the blessing of God, he is quite cheery," said the woman.

3. "I am very happy to see you in better spirits than you were the other night," said Mrs. Benson, "and I am sure that you will get on better now. I will have something sent you each day this week, until your husband can find work again."

4. The eyes of little Harriet beamed with pleasure at seeing the woman look so happy. She ran to fetch her purse, which had seven shillings in it, and slipping it into the hand of her mother, begged her in a whisper to take it for the woman.

5. "You shall have the pleasure of giving it to her yourself," said Mrs. Benson. Harriet, with a delight which none but kind hearts can know, stretched out her hand to the poor woman, who thanked her heartily.

6. As soon as she was gone, Harriet's mother told her children to dress for a long walk. She meant to take them with her to Farmer Wilson's, where they would pass a happy day.

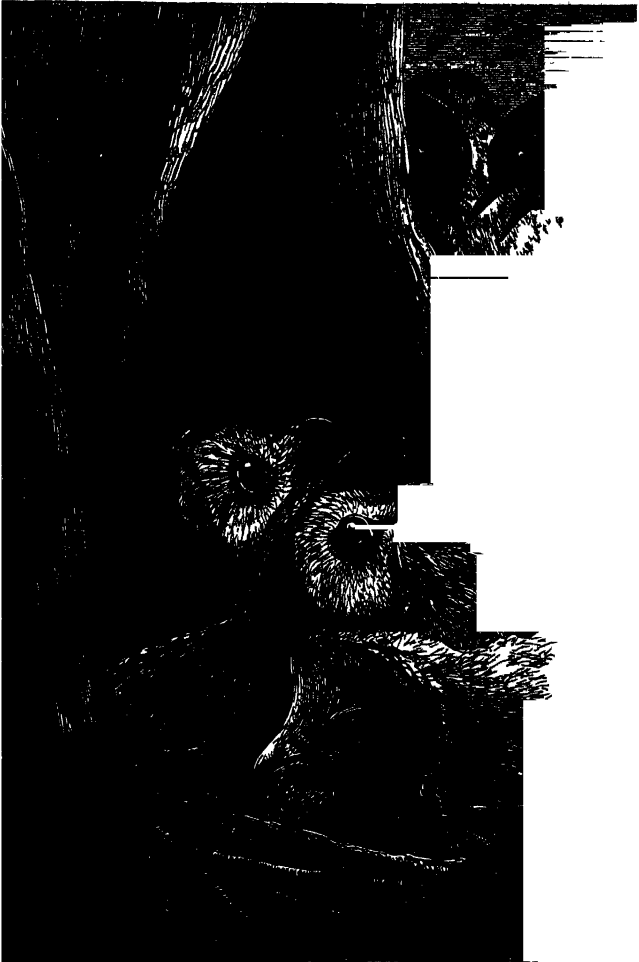
7. The young folks were not slow to obey, and having told the maid the right way to feed Robin and the linnet, and begged her to be sure and not to forget, they went off with their mother.

8. And as they went along they went under the boughs of the tree where the family of robins sat. They seemed to be in great excitement about something, and there were a good many other birds on the boughs around.

9. Upon one of the branches, rather near the top, sat a starling. And he was mocking, in a very saucy manner, the songs of the other birds. First he would try to whistle like a blackbird, then he chuckled like a magpie, or chirped like a sparrow.

10. Then he would suddenly burst into a loud fit of chuckling, as if he were laughing at the rest, and seemed to enjoy the fun.

11. The young redbreasts were much amused



YOUNG OWLS.

at him, but their father, who thought a good deal of his singing, did not seem pleased. He ruffled up his feathers, and asked his nestlings how they would like it if the starling mocked at them.

12. The other birds in the tree were very cross too, and the robin cried out to the starling to be quiet. "Do not laugh at him, my dears," said he. "Do not laugh at him, my dears," repeated the starling in a pert and flippant manner.

13. At this the robin flew at him with fury, for he could bear it no longer. He pecked the starling well, though twice as big as himself, and at last fairly drove him from the tree, quite glad to get away from so fierce a little fellow.

14. "There!" said the robin, as he came back and wiped his beak in triumph. "I have made him sing a different tune now. It will be some time before he comes mocking at my music again."

Questions: 1. What did Harriet give to the poor woman? 2. How did she say that her husband was getting on? 3. What did the mischievous starling do? 4. Who became very angry at the starling's behaviour? 5. What did the father robin forbid his nestlings to do? 6. How did he treat the mimic at last?



## 40. FARMER WILSON.

1. Farmer Wilson was a very good and worthy man. By his hard work and steady ways he had earned enough money to buy the land on which his farmhouse was built, and also the fields lying around it.

2. Mrs. Benson knew that her own children would have a good chance of seeing many different animals rightly treated at this farm, and that was the reason why she had brought them with her.

3. As soon as they were seated in the pleasant parlour of the old farmhouse Mrs. Wilson gave each of her young guests a piece of nice plum cake, made by her daughter Betsy, a little girl of twelve years old.

4. Little Betsy looked on while her cake was enjoyed by Harriet and Fred. She was greatly delighted to see that they thought it so good, as it was the first she had made all by herself.

5. Mrs. Wilson first showed them the house, which was beautifully neat and clean. She then took her guests into the dairy, which was well stored with milk and cream, butter, and fine yellow cheese.

6. From the dairy they went to visit the poultry-yard, where they were charmed, not only

at seeing the cocks and hens, but their broods of downy chicks. Besides these, there were turkeys and ducks, as well as Guinea-fowls.

7. All the fowls showed pleasure at seeing Mrs. Wilson and her little daughter. The cocks cried "Cock-a-doodle-do" at the tops of their voices, the hens gave notice of their approach by cackling, or making short notes of pleasure.

8. Those hens which were mothers gathered their chicks together and led them to the feet of the farmer's wife to see what she had brought for them, the Guinea-fowls ran to meet them, and some pretty pigeons came down from the dove-house.

9. These pigeons were so tame that they perched on little Betsy's shoulders, to the great delight of Harriet and Fred, who wished the birds would treat them in the same way.

10. Betsy gave some handfuls of grain to her little visitors, that they might throw it to the hungry creatures, too. But the pigeons would not come near. "It is because they do not know you," said their mother; "but they would soon learn to come if you were as kind to them each day as Betsy is."

11. When the children had seen the poultry fed, Mrs. Wilson showed them the hen-house and other places. She then opened a little door which led into a wide meadow.



THE POULTRY YARD.

12. Through this green field the hens were allowed to wander as much as they liked, that they might pick up insects in the grass. On seeing their door opened, the cocks and hens all ran into the meadow like a troop of schoolboys into their playground.

Questions · 1. To what did Farmer Wilson owe his success? 2. Why did Mrs. Benson take her children to the farm? 3. How did the poultry receive their friends? 4. What did the pigeons do? 5. What did the cocks and hens enjoy besides being fed?

#### 41. THE PIG AND HIS STY.

1. "You must find a great deal of pleasure, as well as trouble, in tending all these pretty creatures," said Mrs. Benson.

"We do, indeed, ma'am," said the farmer's wife, "and they furnish us with eggs for ourselves as well as for the market, all the year round."

2. "It cannot be an easy matter to manage so many, and to keep them all in health," said Mrs. Benson.

"I make it a rule to render their lives as happy as possible," said the good farmer's wife. "I never shut them up where they can see others running loose, which I think must set them longing for freedom.

3. "When the hens are sitting, or if I am

forced to shut them up, it is only for the shortest possible time. I never take the chickens from the hen till she leaves off caring for them, nor do I ever set hens upon ducks' eggs, which I think cruel.

4. "If we are obliged to sell our hens, I take care to send them away in large hampers where they have plenty of room. I never tie their poor feet, nor do I ever allow them to travel if I can help it.

5. "But, beyond all, I let them have a good run. It is sad to see fowls shut up, for they must fall sick, and cannot enjoy their lives. They live but a short time, and it should be made happy to them, poor things!"

6. While this talk was going on, Fred had followed the fowls into the meadow, where the turkey-cock, who did not like strangers, mistook him for an enemy come to hurt his wife or steal her eggs.

7. Puffing out his feathers, and dragging his wings along the ground, the big bird made a rush at him. At first Fred, who was only a very small boy, cried out for help.

8. But soon remembering that this was cowardly, he pulled off his hat, and waving it in the air, ran towards the turkey-cock. The odd bird turned round at once, for he was more afraid of the boy than Fred was of him.

9. He found that he could soon drive the turkey-cock off, though he did not wish to do any harm to a bird who was trying to take care of his home and mate.

10. The farmer's wife next said she would show them her pigsty. Now, the name of a pigsty is enough to make one think of a very nasty place. But those people who had seen the pigsties on Farmer Wilson's farm had a different idea.

11. These houses for pigs were very neatly paved, and the floors were well washed every day. The troughs in which the pigs were fed were kept clean, and the food they had was always sweet and wholesome.

12. Besides this, no poor pig was shut into his sty all day as if he were in a prison. The pigs had a large field to themselves, near the edge of a wood, and in this place they were free to roam where they pleased.

13. They might dig for roots, or eat grass and weeds, or lie on the cool grass, or bathe in the stream which ran through the meadow. And so the pigs themselves were clean, and looked healthy and clever, as well as happy.

14. Though they could not spell like the learned pig which was shown in London, they made gruntings which sounded like a greeting to those who were kind to them.

Questions: 1. What did the farmer's wife do to make her fowls happy? 2. What bird did Fred meet in the meadow? 3. Why did the turkey-cock run after him? 4. What sort of pigsty was Farmer Wilson's? 5. What made his pigs healthy?

#### 42. THE YOUNG PIGS.

1. "Now come and see my mother pig," said the farmer's wife; "she is in a sty all to herself with her little ones." This was a very amusing sight for the children, who longed to have one of the dear little pigs to play with.

2. But when Fred begged to be allowed to go in and take one, the farmer's wife told him that it would make the old sow very angry, and that her gruntings would frighten him more than the turkey-cock had done.

3. "The bird would not have hurt you," said Mrs. Wilson, "but this old pig would fight for her young." But Fred still wished that he might take home one of the little pigs to keep, if it could be taken without its mother's knowledge.

4. "If it would always stay little, Fred," said his mother, "it would do very well; but what would you do when it grew to be as large as its mother? The little pig would learn to be as fond of you as a dog, and would trot after you.

5. "And when it grew big it would want to do the same. How could you go to school or for a walk with a grown-up pig at your heels? And it would be unkind to shut it up or to treat it roughly after you had made a pet of it.

6. "So I think you had better leave the little pigs where they are."

"I am afraid you will be tired of the pigs," said the farmer's wife, "will you not walk round the garden now?"

"With all my heart," said Mrs. Benson.

7. Mrs. Wilson then took her guests into a garden in which there were plenty of fine vegetables, flowers, and ripe fruit. Fred longed to taste some of the currants and gooseberries, but he waited till he was asked.

8. After a few moments, however, he was rewarded. Mrs. Wilson gave Harriet and her little brother leave to pick as many cherries as they liked, and after getting a fine large cabbage-leaf full, they went into a shady arbour to eat them.

9. After this they went to see the bees at work in glass hives. This pleased the children as much as anything they had seen, and Mrs. Benson was delighted also, as she understood what the curious insects were about.

10. It would not have given her so much delight had she thought of the bees only as stinging





FEEDING THE PIGS.

insects of which she ought to be afraid. "This is quite a treat to me," she said to the farmer's wife, "for it is the first time that I ever saw bees at work in glass hives."

11. "Madam," said Mrs. Wilson, "I would not lose one of them for anything. They work for us, and I value them as good servants. Through the winter, after their honey has been taken away, I feed them most carefully.

12. "They have plenty of sugar and water, and sometimes I buy honey for them instead of that which I take. I know the queen bee of each hive, who will come to me when I call her, and you shall see one of them if you like."

13. On this, the farmer's wife made a sound which the little people dwelling in the hive understood very well, and a large bee soon settled on her hand. In an instant after, she was covered from head to foot with bees, for they all followed where their queen went.

Questions : 1. What did Fred wish to have as a pet ? 2. What did his mother say about the little pig ? 3. What did Harriet and Fred enjoy in the garden ? 4. What sort of hives were the bees working in ? 5. What did the farmer's wife do for her bees in winter ? 6. What did she do to show Mrs. Benson ?

## 43. MRS. WILSON AND HER BEES.

1. When Harriet Benson saw the bees settle on the farmer's wife, she was very much afraid that they would sting. She was going to run away, but Mrs. Wilson told her they would do no harm unless someone pulled them about.

2. "Bees are very harmless creatures, you may be sure of that," said she, "though, of course, they will sting cruel children who catch and hurt them. It is the only way they have of taking care of their own lives.

3. "Wasps, too, are often thought to be far more fierce than they really are. If people would let them alone they would not sting, for they do so only to defend themselves."

4. She then threw up her hand, on which the queen bee flew away in great state, surrounded by her guards, and followed by the rest of her subjects, each ready to lose his own life in defence of her.

5. "Look," said Harriet, "there is a pretty bee on that rose! It looks as if it had on a velvet coat."

"That is not a hive bee," said her mother, "it is a wild bee, or humble bee.

6. "But it does its work as well as the others, living alone in a small hole which it makes,

instead of with others in a hive. But, come, we we must not stay all day with the bees."

7. As they walked along, Fred so far forgot himself as to catch a moth; but his mother made him let it go at once. "Don't you think it is wrong to let children catch butterflies and moths?" said the farmer's wife.

"Indeed I do," said Mrs. Benson, "poor little creatures!"

8. "I often think of something which my good father used to say," added Mrs. Wilson. "Never take the life of any creature, either small or great, unless you are obliged to do it for a good reason.

9. "While there is food enough in the world for them let them all live and enjoy the blessings for which they were made. Besides, we do not yet know of how much use each creature is, and till we do know we should not rashly destroy any."

10. "When I was a little girl," said Mrs. Benson, "I was only too fond of running after butterflies and other insects to catch them. But my father used to keep a glass, through which one could see these creatures. It made them look larger than they really are.

11. "He would show me a number of different insects through this glass, and tell me how wonderfully perfect they were in every part. This made me feel that even the smallest creature

must know what pain is, and be able to feel joy.

12. "After looking at insects in this way I could never bear to kill them. I declare that to this day, if I step on a small creature by accident, I cannot help fancying that I hear its frame crack, see its blood flow, and its beautiful form being crushed."

Questions: 1 What did Mrs. Wilson say about wasps? 2. What did Fred do on the way home? 3. What did his mother make him do with the moth? 4. What did she say that her father had shown her?

#### 44 SPIDERS AND THEIR WEBS.

1. "It always goes against me to break a fine spider's web," said Mrs. Wilson, "and yet they make a house look very dirty. I took care, when I first came to live here, to destroy the nests, and the old spiders forsook the house.

2. "I am inclined to think that cleanliness, and much sweeping and scrubbing, would rid places of other insects, so that these creatures need not be allowed to settle in them. Thus no killing would be necessary."

3. "No doubt," said Mrs. Benson. "But, pray tell me, do you destroy the webs of the garden spiders also?" "Oh, dear, no," said

Mrs. Wilson, "for they are both pretty and useful. The spiders protect the fruit from flies.

4. "I would not harm one of them. How should I like to have my house swept away, and my little ones taken out of my arms, or from their warm beds, and crushed to death?"

5. "I think that it would be a good thing, before killing any creature, to fancy we change places with it," said Mrs. Benson. "If we were to put ourselves in the place of the bee, ant, butterfly, or kitten, and think how we should feel, it would often make us more tender."

6. "Well," said Harriet, "I am sure I shall never kill anything without first making it seem large in my own mind, and thinking what it would say if it could speak."

"Then, I am sure, my dear, that you will put very few creatures to death," said her mother.

7. "It is very mean to destroy a creature because it is small. In children it is most absurd, for they themselves are little. If little things ought to be hurt and killed by big ones, children ought to be ill-used by grown-up people."

8. The next place to which Mrs. Wilson took her guests was a barn-yard, in which was a large horse-pond. Here her young visitors were delighted with a number of ducks and geese, some of which were swimming in the water and rout-



THE DUCK POND.

ing in the mud to see what fish or worms they could find.

9. "It seems strange to me," said Harriet, "that any creature can take delight in making itself so dirty."

"Dirty?" said her mother. "They do not make themselves dirty. See how white and clean the ducks are! I only wish that little boys and girls were half as clean."

10. "Are there any fish here?" said Fred to Mrs. Wilson.

"None of any size," said she; "the ducks and geese would take care that not many should grow big. But there are plenty in a pond which you will see in the next field."

11. "Mother," said Fred, "is it cruel to kill frogs and toads?"

"Very cruel," she replied. "They are harmless creatures, and useful in eating slugs, flies, and insects. They have plenty of enemies, for many birds feed on them, so we need not add to their troubles."

12. "My husband will not allow one to be killed," said Mrs. Wilson; "and he forbids his men to kill moles, harmless snakes, and hedgehogs, not only because it is cruel, but because these things are his useful servants. Snakes feed on beetles and sometimes on small mice, and so they do good."



Questions : 1. What did Mrs. Wilson say about spider's webs in her garden ? 2. What plan did Mrs. Benson suggest for making us more tender-hearted ? 3. What did Harriet say that she should do before killing anything ? 4. What did Fred's mother say about frogs and toads ? 5. What creatures did the farmer protect ? 6. Why did he forbid his men to kill harmless snakes ?

#### 45. SHEEP AND COWS.

1. "Do your boys ever go birds'-nesting?" asked Fred of the farmer's wife.

"No, my dear," said she; "I hope I have not a child in my family who would do such a cruel act.

2. "In the course of the summer we often have young birds to nurse, which fall out of their nests or lose their parents. But we are seldom able to rear them.

3. "My husband never kills the rooks nor the sparrows, for they are very useful in picking up grubs and other hurtful creatures. We only set a little boy to watch our new-sown grain, and he frightens the sparrows away."

4. They were now glad to go in. The table was covered with good, plain food, and the party felt hungry. They said afterwards they had never enjoyed a meal half so much.

5. The farmer, who was a merry man, said a number of funny things which amused his little

visitors very much, and soon after dinner he begged leave to go, as he was sheep-shearing.

6. As he thought that the children might be pleased at the sight, he asked them to pay him a visit in the field, so they all went to the meadow together.

7. It was a pretty sight to see the happy sheep, who lately waddled under a hot and heavy load, set free from their burden, leaping and frisking with delight. On the ground lay the heaps of wool, ready to make warm clothing for the winter.

8 "I should like to see the cows milked before we go," said Mrs. Benson.

"I suppose that your little boy and girl will not be afraid of the horned cattle?" said the farmer's wife.

9. "Oh, I am not afraid," said Fred. "I would rather get up and ride on their horns than run away."

By this time they had come pretty close to the farinyard, and Fred did not feel quite so brave as he had done at a distance.

10. He spied one of the cows peeping over a gate, on which, with a face full of fear, he ran quickly to his mother, and asked her whether cows could toss people over gates.

11. "What a silly question," said his mother. "The cow will not hurt you. I thought you



MILKING THE COWS.

said just now that you would like to ride on her horns? If you go and make friends with them, they will grow fond of you, and will not wish to do you harm."

12. Leaving his mother's gown, to which he had held fast, Fred made up his mind to go quite close to the cow and stroke her with his hand, if she would let him. As he was only a very little fellow, this showed some courage on his part.

13. They all enjoyed seeing the sleek, smooth, meek cows yielding their sweet milk, and after this they went again to the house, where tea, with cake and bread and butter, were ready for them.

14. The farmer then came in, very thirsty after the toils of the day, and enjoyed a draught of warm, refreshing tea. He began to chat with Mrs. Benson about the farm.

15. "Neither my wife nor I lead an idle life, I can assure you, madam," he said; "but next to the blessing of Heaven, I think I owe my good success and happy life to my cattle, horses, sheep, and other dumb creatures which help to bring me my daily bread."

Questions : 1 Why did the farmer protect rooks and sparrows? 2. How did he drive the sparrows from the wheat? 3. Why were the sheep glad to be sheared? 4. What meal did they all eat after seeing the cows milked? 5. To what did the farmer say that he owed his good fortune?

## 46. A MERCIFUL MAN.

1. "And did your father leave you this farm?" said Mrs. Benson to Mr. Wilson.

"Yes," said the farmer, "with a few acres of land, a horse, a cow, a few sheep, a sow and pigs, a donkey, and a few fowls.

2. "Ever since then I have had fine crops of hay and corn, so that each year I laid money by. Soon I was able to buy more land, and I have grown richer year by year, as you see."

3. "I never heard a farmer say that he owed his success to his cattle before," said Mrs. Benson. "I wish you would tell me what you mean."

"To be sure, madam," said the farmer.

4. "When I was a young man I heard a fine sermon on the duty of showing kindness to all dumb creatures, as we do to mankind. And after hearing it I made up my mind to do to my beasts as I would be done by. This is why they have served me well, and brought me money.

5. "I consider each beast that works for me as my servant, to whom wages are due. But as beasts cannot use money, I pay them in things that are of greater value to them, good food, care, kindness.

6. "I let them enjoy their Sunday rest. I

never let them work beyond their strength, I always see them well fed, and I never allow them to be struck or cruelly used by strangers.

7. "When my animals grow old and can work no longer, I let them live in the fields as long as they are happy, but when life becomes a trouble to them instead of a pleasure, I have them put to death in the most painless way that I can

8. "You may have seen an old white horse in the meadow, madam, down by the pond. He is a good old friend and servant of mine. It would be a shame indeed to sell him, for how should I know that his new master used him well?

9. "No, poor old Snowdrop shall have his mouthful of grass and his drink of fresh water, and shelter at night from the cold, as long as ever he can enjoy these good things."

10. "I wish every man thought as you do," said Mrs. Benson, "but my watch tells me that it is time to be going, so we must say good-bye, with many thanks to you and your wife for our happy day."

11. As they went back in the carriage, Mrs. Benson said that the story of Farmer Wilson was enough to make everyone who heard it careful of their animals for the sake of their own purse, as well as of mercy.

12. The next morning the redbreasts came to



THE OLD HORSE.

Mrs. Benson's as usual, and Robin was still better. When they flew away, they soon found themselves in a meadow, on one side of which was a row of fine oak trees. On a branch of one of these they sat.

13. On the next tree a blackbird and a thrush poured forth their sweet songs; a number of linnets joined them. The little robins had not long been in the tree, when they spied a man below, who was scattering food on the ground.

14. "Look there!" said Dicky, "what fine food that man throws down! I daresay he is some kind creature who is a friend to us; shall we go down and have pick up some of it?"

15. "Do not be in a hurry, Dicky," said his father, "watch here with me a little while, and then you shall please yourself." All the little ones stretched out their necks and kept their bright eyes fixed on the man.

16. In a few moments a number of sparrows, chaffinches, and linnets went down, and began to feast on the food which the man had placed beneath. He himself withdrew a little way off.

Questions : 1. What did the farmer consider each beast that worked for him to be? 2. As money was of no value to animals how did he pay his creatures? 3. When too old to work how were his animals treated? 4. What did he say that Snowdrop should have? 5. What did Mrs. Benson say on the way home? 6. What did the young birds see under the oak tree?



## 47. THE BIRD CATCHER.

1. The man, who was a bird-catcher by trade, now called another man to help him. In a moment all the poor little birds which had been feasting on the ground felt a net suddenly cast over them.

2. The two men caught them, and put the unhappy little things into a cage. This cage was divided into a number of small parts, and the linnets, chaffinches, and others were put each by themselves into it.

3. In this dismal prison where they had hardly room to flutter, the poor little birds were thrust! What a sad change for them after singing free on the boughs!

4. The little redbreasts trembled, and wished to fly away. "There," said the father, "what about your friend now, Dicky? Will you not look twice now before picking up crumbs scattered by strangers? No man in the world is so dreadful as the bird-catcher.

5. "Those little creatures which he has carried off will never be set free again, most of them will die from sorrow or fright, or from hurts. The rest will spend a life in prison. It is far better to die than be kept in a cage."

6. They then flew about seeing the sights,

till presently the father robin gave a great start and cried out loudly, "Turn this way, turn this way!" Lucky it was that they did so at once, for at the same instant they saw a fearful flash of fire.

7. A thick smoke followed it, and then a dreadful sound like thunder. A young bird fell wounded and bleeding to the ground, and struggled there for a moment. Then he lay quite still.

8. The little redbreasts were now in terror, and asked the meaning of this dreadful accident. "How was the poor little bird killed? What did he die of?" asked they, both at once.

9. "He was shot to death," said the father robin. "The same thing might have happened to you, to me, or to your mother. Men have something to do with it, for it does not happen where they do not come.

10. "But come, let us take a sip of fresh water from this stream, and we will try to find some place where we may amuse ourselves without running into such dangers. Are you rested enough to take a pretty long flight?"

11. "Oh, yes," said Dicky, who was quite eager now to leave the spot. The father led the way, and in a short time he and his family came to a grand house of a rich gentleman.

12. Among the other strange things to be

seen here was a huge bird-cage, called an aviary, which was built like a temple. Bright brass wires were round it, and the framework was painted green, and decked with gilt carvings.

13. In the middle a fountain threw up fresh water, which fell into a basin with flowers round it. At one end were troughs holding many kinds of food for birds, and places for nests.

14. It seemed as if a dwelling like this must make any bird happy, and Dicky wished very much to go in. "Wait a little," said his father, "find out first whether the birds who live here are really happy before you wish to change places with them."

15. "Sit here on this bush. Then you will soon hear what the birds are saying within, and if you still wish to go inside, I will not prevent you. "Here is a twig close to the wire bars and remember, those who once get on the other side can never get out again, no matter how much they may try."

Questions: 1. What did the man under the tree do? 2. Into what sort of place did he thrust the birds? 3. What did the father robin say would be the fate of these birds in the net? 4. What loud noise did the robins hear next? 5. Where did they go after sipping some water? 6. Describe what they saw at the gentleman's house.

## 48. THE UNHAPPY DOVE.

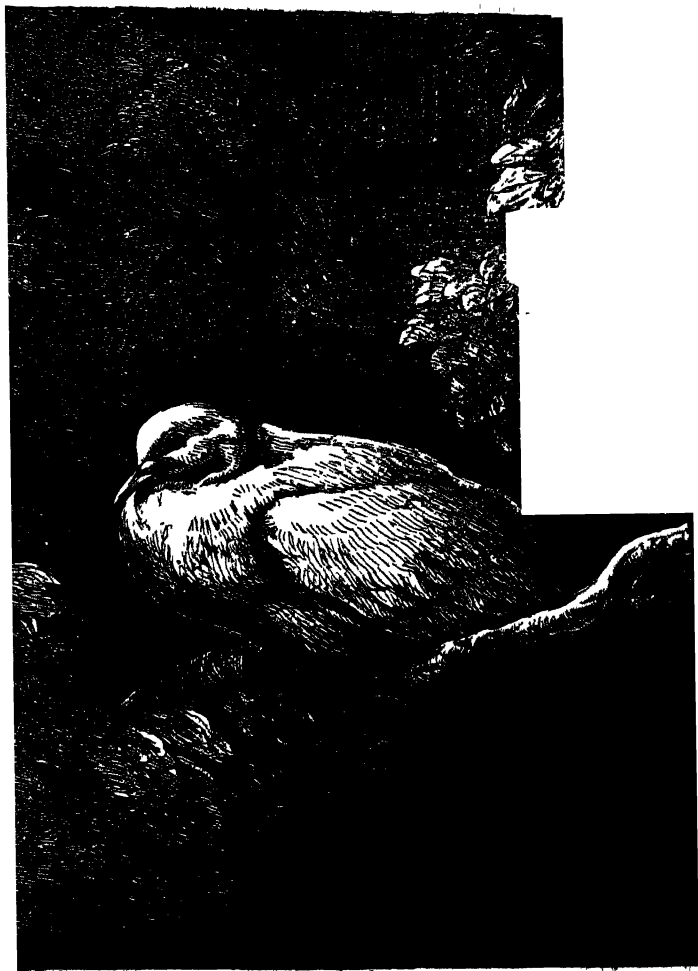
1. The first bird that Dicky saw inside the aviary was a dove, who sat cooing in so sweet and gentle a tone that a stranger who listened would have heard him with delight, but the redbreasts, who knew what he meant, heard him with sorrow.

2. "Oh, my dear mate," said he, "am I then taken away from you for ever? Of what use is all this food to me, this clear water and this sheltered place? Without you I cannot enjoy anything.

3. "They will not let me out to go and find you. Never more shall I have pretty nestlings to feed in the trees! Never more shall I stretch my wings and fly far away, or roam where I please." Here his voice failed, and he became silent from grief.

4. "The dove is not happy, you see," said the hen redbreast to Dicky. "Let us hear what that lark has to say." His eyes were turned towards the sky, he fluttered his wings, he strained his throat, and to a human eye would have seemed full of joy.

5. But the redbreasts saw that he sang from violent grief, not joy. "And am I always to



THE UNHAPPY DOVE.

be shut up in this hateful place?" sang he; "is my upward flight to be stopped by bars? Must I no longer soar towards the bright sun, and make the arch of heaven echo to my voice?"

6. "Shall I never build my nest and rear young in a cornfield again? Oh, cruel and unjust man, to take from a poor little bird all that he holds dear, that you may enjoy his song! But of what use is it to complain? No one will listen. I shall die here in my prison."

7. "What do you think now, Dicky," said the redbreast. "Do you still think that the birds in the aviary are better off than you?"

"I cannot help thinking that it is a very nice place; it must be very comfortable to have everything that one wants!"

8. "Well," said the father, "let us move on," and they went close to the branches of a tree in the aviary, in which a pair of linnets were seated. "Come," said one of the linnets, "let us finish the nest, though there is small pleasure in hatching a set of poor little prisoners."

9. "How different it would be if we were free in the fields! Men, it is true, have given us some stuff to make our nest of, but how much happier we should have been seeking it ourselves! And they cannot find the right things as we should have done."

10. "How dull and wretched it is never to

fly about! There is no room here to take a good leap and a wide sweeping flight."

At this instant a hen goldfinch brought out her brood, which were fledged.

11. "Come, my nestlings, use your wings," said she. So the little ones divided, and tried to fly. But one of them hit himself against the bars, and fell down hurt.

"Why cannot I soar as other birds do?" said he.

12. "Alas!" said the mother, "we are shut in, and cannot. We shall never get out, so you must make the best of it here."

"Never get out?" said the little ones, "then we shall never be able to play with the birds outside, which we see flying to and fro."

13. Dicky had sat thoughtfully while this went on, and he now said, "Let us go back to the orchard, where we can fly about. I am afraid they will shut us up here. I see that nothing is of use to a bird unless he is free."

14. So the robin family went back to the orchard, where they lived in peace and joy. Each of the young birds grew up to have a mate and nest; and no birds could be better off than they were. Fred and Harriet soon let Robin go, for his wing healed in due time.

15. The other little birds, left orphans in their charge, learnt little by little to feed them-

selves in the garden, and lived there in pleasant freedom. How happy the world would be if all persons in it thought of the welfare of all other creatures as well as of their own!

Questions: 1. What bird did they see first in the aviary? 2. What was the dove really saying? 3. What were the linnets doing? 4. What other bird was there? 5. What did Dicky think when he had seen them all? 6. How could the world be made happy?



# KEEPER'S TRAVELS IN SEARCH OF HIS MASTER.

## 1. THE MARKET PLACE.

1. Keeper was a dog, or rather a puppy, who loved his master dearly, and who followed him as carefully as any dog ever did. Yet it happened that one market day his thoughts were so taken up by a basket of fowls which stood for sale that he lost sight of his owner.

2. Keeper could not find him anywhere. The market-place was crowded, and as his master was moving about while Keeper stood close to the chicken basket, the man had hardly gone a few steps before the crowd hid him from the dog's eyes.

3. Keeper at once tried sniffing at the ground to find where his master had gone. But, as he was a very young dog, he was not so good at this work as an old dog would have been. The master soon missed his little friend, too.

4. Had Keeper been wise enough to stay by

the basket, they would soon have met again, for the man went back to look for him there. But Keeper was gone.

5. As he could neither see nor smell his dear master, he was running about among the crowd in a great fright, like some poor, little, lost child. Both the master and the dog were sad and sorry, and tried very hard to find each other.

6. This they would soon have done, but Keeper made a new mistake. He ran up to this man and that, and, at last, at the end of a long street leading into the country, he thought that at last he really did spy him.

7. The gentleman whom Keeper now followed was on horseback; like his master, and Keeper was most joyful at overtaking him. On reaching the horse, he tried to show his delight, but felt surprise and grief at the coldness with which he was met.

8. The stranger, it is true, gave him a few kind words, but did not seem to care much about him; and when Keeper began at length to leap up to the stirrup, a slight cut of the whip was the only return he met with.

9. But even though his master seemed unkind, nothing could rob Keeper of the delight he felt in finding him again. On, therefore, he went by the side of the stranger till he had gone over at least five miles of ground.

10. It was only when, at last, the stranger got off his horse to talk with some friends, that



INTERESTED IN THE FOWLS.

poor Keeper found out that he was quite unlike his old master. When the man got on again,

Keeper no longer followed him, but stood looking around him in fear.

11. The road was as strange as the man. Neither hedge, nor stone, nor bank, nor tree, nor house did he remember to have ever seen before. He now felt all the depth of his woe.

12. While the stranger rode on, Keeper stood gazing for a few seconds after him, one paw lifted up and his nose stretched forward, still trying to smell his master. But it was of no use. And now came the agony of despair.

13. In all the world Keeper had nothing belonging to him but his master. His master was his world, his protector, his work, his pleasure, the object and, as it were, the reason of his life.

14. To be without his master was to be without all these things! In his anguish he ceased to look or to smell after anything, and, lifting his nose in the air, he howled for very misery.

15. He made his cry without caring who heard it. He prayed not only to everything he knew but to everything he did not know for pity and for help. But Keeper did not long give way to useless grief.

16. There was room for hope. He began to think, "Did I leave my master behind, after all? Is he where the chickens were, still?" As these thoughts shot across his mind Keeper changed his howl of sorrow for a short, eager bark.

17. He hastened back towards the town. At first he ran with all his might, feeling sure that he would now find his master; then an inward doubt made him slacken his pace.

18. In this way, now running fast and then trotting more slowly, Keeper reached the market-place where he had been lost some hours before.

Questions: 1. How did Keeper lose sight of his master? 2. How was it that he could not scent him very well? 3. What did he see at the end of a long street? 4. How did the stranger receive Keeper? 5. When did the dog find out his mistake? 6. What did he begin to think after the man rode away? 7. Where did he run?

## 2. THE DROWNED PUPPIES.

1. The market-place was now clear, the country people had gone to their homes, and the high street was empty and silent. Keeper ran to the inn where his master's horse had been put into a stable, and very woeful he looked.

2. With head, tail, and ears all hanging down, he ran into the parlour, then to the stables, and then he visited the kitchen and every part of the house. But he could neither find his master nor anything belonging to him.

3. There was nothing left now for him to do but to go to the place from which they had both

set out that morning. This was a difficult matter, and Keeper would not have found his master, even if he had tried to run all that distance.

4. For he had not gone back to the same place, nor was he near Keeper's old home. He would only have found the house from which they started, but not his master.

5. For Keeper's master had that morning fetched him from the place where the dog had been born, in order to take him to his new home. And this was how it came to pass that Keeper became his master's dog.

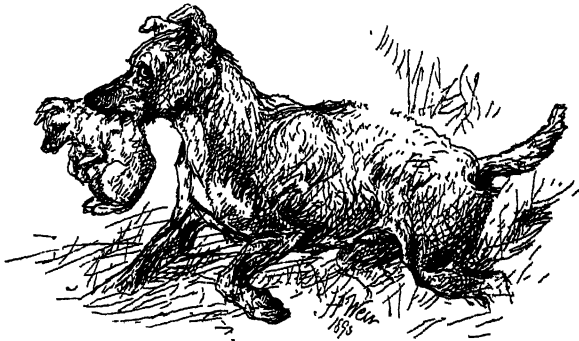
6. One morning, when his master was staying at the house where Keeper's mother lived, some puppies were to be drowned. The mother could not bring them all up, nor could good homes be found for them.

7. So it was kinder to put them to a merciful death. Our little friend Keeper was among the puppies who were to die, and with the rest he was placed in a bucket of water. The mother was allowed to keep one puppy to comfort her in losing the rest.

8. But she was not content with this. Missing her little ones, she wandered about in search of them. After it was thought that the puppies had been long enough in the water, they were taken out and buried.

9. But what was the surprise of the servant who opened the stables next morning to see the loving mother of these puppies comfortably suckling three of them among the straw of a manger near which a horse was tied!

10. The eyes of the poor dog shone in the light, as she lifted her head, with fear, lest the young ones should again be taken from her.



SHE CARRIED THEM BACK TO THE STABLE.

The stable boy could hardly believe his senses, for he had buried the drowned puppies himself the night before.

11. He took each one up in his hands to make sure they were the same. Then he went and told the groom that "the dead pups were alive." But no one had the heart to take them from the mother again.

12. In the night, when all was still, she had

crept about still looking for them. She came to the place where they were buried, dug them up, carried them to the stable, and there, with the warmth of her own body, had tried to bring them back to life.

13. As they had been not quite drowned, she managed to revive three out of the four; the other was cold and lifeless. Everyone came to the stable to look at Juno and her children, and each one had a pat and a kind word for her.

14. The master of Juno said he would find homes for the pups, and Keeper was then given to one of the guests who looked on, and during the time that his new master stayed in the house, Keeper became very fond of him.

15. After being there for a few months, the two started for London. It was on the way there that Keeper had been lost in the market-place. His master and he travelled part of the way in a carriage.

16. Thus it happened that Keeper had never seen the real home of his master. The road he had passed over the day before, and the house of a friend where they had slept, were the only spots which came into Keeper's head as likely ones in which to find his master.

17. And to these places he would at once have run, though he was footsore and ready to drop from weariness, but that a man at the inn, seeing



a strange dog running to and fro, began to take notice of him.

18. He said that so handsome and good tempered a dog was sure to be asked after, so he shut Keeper up.

Questions · 1. What had happened when Keeper reached the market place? 2. Where did he go next? 3. Why were the puppies put into a bucket of water? 4. What did the mother do? 5. What did the master then say? 6. What did a man at the inn do with Keeper?

### 3 KEEPER'S ESCAPE FROM THE INN.

1. Now it happened that the master of Keeper, as soon as he found that the dog was missing, went back himself to the inn and left his name and address with the inn keeper.

2. He told him to look out for the dog, and to let him know if Keeper came to the place. But the man who shut Keeper up had heard nothing of this, and did not know to whom he belonged.

3. He fed Keeper well, went away, and shut the door of the stable. Keeper was so tired with the day's running that he dozed, dreaming of his master, and waking every now and then to see if anyone had left the door open.

4. For he had made up his mind to dart out

and go again in search of his master the first moment that he could. He whined, barked, and scratched for a long while as soon as it grew light the next morning, for he wished to start.

5. Though he had food and a good bed, he did not care for that without his master. But he was pleased to find that in this stable his master's horse had been fed, for he could smell him.

6. A lad who helped in the stables opened the door by-and-by, and as he had not been told to keep the dog in, he let Keeper rush out. As he was now free, he ran again into the inn, and went to the door of each room, to find whether his friend had slept there.

7. After this, not finding him in any, he started off for the house at which they had slept some nights before. For a space of two hours his little feet were in quick motion.

8. All the time that he ran, it was strange how few of the people whom he met allowed the poor dog to pass without hurting or teasing him in some way! If it was a cart that passed, he was sure to get a cut from the long whip.

9. If a boy was going to school, or a ploughman to work, or a shepherd to the fold, a stone must be thrown at Keeper, to send him forward, limping and howling, for the next quarter of a mile.

10. Was it not hard, when all he asked was to be let alone, and when he did no one the least harm? It is a wonder that people can take pleasure in worrying a poor, friendless creature.

11. But all the boys whom Keeper met were not cruel. Beside the road, tending a few sheep, was a lad named Geoffry Trueheart, and something in this boy's face made Keeper give him a wag of the tail as he went by.

12. Lying on his back doing nothing, lay another boy, close to Geoffry, and when he caught sight of Keeper, he said to Geoffry, "Now, you shall see how I will hit him over the nose. No other fellow can throw a stone like me."

13. But Timothy, for that was the other boy's name, was mistaken this time. The stone did not reach Keeper; if it had, most likely it would have half killed him, or at least broken his leg. But, as Timothy got up to throw the stone, Geoffry started up too.

14. Just as the bad boy was in the act of flinging, Geoffry gave his elbow a nudge, and away went the stone harmlessly spinning through the air, and Keeper's nose was safe this time.

15. Timothy turned angrily upon Geoffry, but, being a coward, he felt afraid to measure strength with him. So he lay down in a lazy way on the grass again. Geoffry now tried to

tempt Keeper by holding out to him a share of his dinner.

16. After hearing his kindly voice the dog came up, wagging his tail, and Geoffry patted him on the head. "Where do you come from, I wonder, poor fellow?" said he. But Keeper had to content himself with wagging his tail, for he could not answer.

17. "I think that this dog has lost his master," said Geoffry to Timothy. "Who knows but that his master is killed, or has broken his leg, and the dog is going to fetch somebody to him? I have heard of such things.

18. "What a shame it would be to lame or hinder him! You talk a great deal about what you learn from books, Timothy; do you learn that it is fine and manly to throw stones at a poor dumb thing that can't defend itself?

19. "If that is what books teach, I am glad I can't read. For my part I would rather be good than learned, and the folk who are good to one thing will be good to another. Good to man, good to beast."

Questions: 1. What had Keeper's master left at the inn? 2. What did the stable lad do? 3. Where did Keeper go first on rushing out of the stable? 4. Where did he run next? 5. What troubles did he meet on the way? 6. What boy was good to Keeper?

## 4. KEEPER AND THE BULLDOG.

1. After a little while, Keeper found himself in a little village. A few quiet people lived in it, and it was not at all like the big town which he had left. Keeper thought that he might pass through without danger, but he was mistaken.

2. In the little street stood a butcher's shop, and in front of it lay a bulldog, sleeping peacefully. He was a good-tempered old fellow, and liked his ease, but at the door stood his master, an idle and cruel boy, who slyly woke up the dog and set him at Keeper.

3. When his master told him to fly at the strange dog, of course, Nipper, the bulldog, thought that it was his duty to do it. And he rushed at Keeper with open mouth, who had nothing to do but run away, as fast as his legs would carry him.

4. But he did not escape without feeling the teeth of the bulldog, who had thrown him upon his back at a touch, and who might have killed him, but that the bulldog was driven off by some men who came running up.

5. The cruel young butcher was afraid that he would be punished for setting his dog to fight, so he slunk away. But those who had driven the bulldog away now chased Keeper

himself away with sticks, stones, groans, and mocking laughter.

6. He managed to get away with a torn ear, a bite upon his right foreleg, and with the left hinder one almost broken by the blow of a heavy stick, thrown by the squire's son, who called himself a gentleman, and who ought to have known better.

7. Away rushed Keeper, half dead from fear and pain, and darted in at the open door of a cottage by the roadside. He felt that a human roof was the best place for him, and that he might meet with some kindness in there.

8. As Keeper had come down the road, he had yelped aloud from the pain of his wounds, but no sooner was he laid upon the floor, than, panting for breath, he became quite quiet, and faintly tried to lick his sores.

9. In the cottage, Keeper's sudden entrance made a great hubbub. In front of the door a cock and two hens were quietly picking up their supper, the cock very busy scratching the gravel and then peering after every fresh scrape to see what he had found.

10. Inside the door a chicken was looking for stray crumbs under the table. On this same table stood a small mug. On one side of this a ship was drawn, and on the other side the words "A present for Jemmy" were printed.

11. And, just in the doorway, crawling on all fours, mooring playfully at the cocks and hens, was Jemmy himself. Though Keeper was greatly



NIPPER THE BULLDOG.

frightened himself, he tried not to frighten the little child.

12. But Jemmy was startled all the same, and

set up a fearful roaring. The cocks and hens were quite as much alarmed. The chicken lost all presence of mind. Springing from under the table, with fluttering wings, she threw down the mug and broke it to pieces.

13. Jemmy, though he did not care for his loss, was scared by the din. In the window sat a motherly cat sleeping, and before the fire lay a couple of kittens. Old puss, at the first moment of the noise, leaped from the edge of the window.

14. She ran past Jemmy and the fowls at the door, and took refuge on the roof of the pigsty, where it was warm with sunshine. One of the kittens, whose name was Tommy, ran under a footstool.

15. His brother, Sammy, sprang on to the top shelf of the dresser, where, without knocking down a single cup or saucer, he took a seat upon a little pile of books, so close to the ceiling that his back was squeezed against it and his head bent downwards.

Questions · 1. What sort of place was the village? 2. What shop stood in one of the streets? 3. Was the bulldog or the boy more to blame? 4. Where did Keeper run after the bulldog left him? 5. What creatures were outside the cottage? 6. What did he find within?



## 5. THE BLACKSMITH AND HIS WIFE.

1. If poor Keeper had chanced to run into the cottage of a hard-hearted man, it would have been a sad thing for him. But the cottage belonged to James Higgins, the blacksmith, and Nelly, his wife, both of whom were kind to all dumb animals.

2. Nelly was out feeding the pigs when the screams of little Jemmy called her, and she ran as fast as she could to see what was the matter. She soon snatched up the baby, set the table on its legs again, and cast a glance at the stray dog.

3. It was enough for her to see that Keeper was hurt, tired, and homeless; trembling all over, and without moving from under the chair which he had chosen, Keeper lifted his face to Nelly's and seemed to beg her pardon and pity.

4. Nelly was not afraid of a dog whose face seemed to say that he was in pain, and also showed that he was gentle. Keeper no sooner saw Nelly's eyes fixed on him than he knew that his peace was made.

5. Stooping down, she spoke kindly to him, and her voice set him at his ease. She then began to pat his head, and to see what could be

done for his wounds. As she touched his limbs the pain made him shrink, but he licked the hand which gave him this pain.

6. The next thing she did was to set food and drink almost at his nose. But for the present Keeper would neither eat nor drink. Nelly therefore thought that rest and peace would be the best thing for him, so she went back to the work of feeding the pigs.

7. Sunset brought her husband home from the forge. As Keeper thought it was his duty to take care of the house where he had been so kindly treated, he gave a low growl at the master, not knowing who he was.

8. But he grew quiet in a moment when Nelly spoke to him. Keeper guessed that they were talking about him and looked at them both as if praying for their kindness. And he could not have asked for the goodwill of a better man than James.

9. He was a good workman, as well as a good Christian. His spare time after the day's work was spent in learning to draw, and some drawings of the foot of a horse, which hung on the walls, were done by himself.

10. For James knew that in order to shoe horses well, a man must understand how the foot is made. And nothing teaches this so well as drawing. It was upon his own little pile of

books that the kitten was sitting, and nothing would tempt her to come down.

11. Tommy, who was braver, crept out from under the stool to leap on the blacksmith's knee, but Sammy waited till he saw the supper on the table. Then, neither the fear of Keeper nor any other reason could keep him back.

12. More than once he thought of leaping on to his master's shoulder, but it seemed too far off. At last, Nelly, fearing he would jump into the middle of the supper table and upset the milk, lent him a helping hand.

13. Keeper, happy at the kind words of James and Nelly, now rose, and, creeping to the food and water which had been placed for him, made a meal, and then, lame and tired, limped off to lie down. But this time, seeing how welcome he was made, he now laid himself before the fire.

Questions: 1. Who was the master of the cottage? 2. What sort of woman was the mistress? 3. What did Keeper do when James Higgins first came in? 4. Why did he growl? 5. Who did Sammy like best in the world? 6. Where did Keeper lie after his meal?

## 6. THE KIND DOCTOR.

1. Higgins being a blacksmith, was, of course, a bit of a horse and dog doctor as well.

He knew a good deal about animals, and was aware of the ease with which their blood, when in a healthy state, allows wounds and bruises to heal.

2. But he was not sure what was the matter with Keeper's hind leg. If it was broken, it ought to be set at once. As soon as he had done supper, he said to Nelly, "I will go to Doctor Allright. It will not take long.

3. "The doctor told me he was coming in soon to see our Jemmy, and whether he was cutting his teeth well. I am sure that so good-hearted a man will not mind stepping up when he hears that a poor dog has been badly used."

4. Nelly thought it a good plan to fetch the doctor, the more so as Jemmy's tooth had been giving the little fellow trouble. So James took his hat and was soon at the doctor's door.

5. Doctor Allright was at home, having just come back from a long ride. And now, having seen his horse fed and watered, which he always did before touching his own food, he had just sat down, with his wife and children round him, to tea.

6. "Come in, my good fellow," said he, calling to James; "sit you down, and you can tell me the news while I take my tea. How are Nelly and Jemmy? You know I promised to look in. I have not forgotten, but I have had a hard day to-day."

7. "No hurry, doctor, Nelly shall bring up the child in the morning. To tell you the truth, doctor, I came here to get something for a strange dog that has been very much ill-used, and that ran into my cottage this afternoon.



SOMETHING WRONG.

8. "He has been there ever since, with a broken leg, I fancy. But if you are too tired, you must not think of coming out. And besides, sir, I have no right to be making a dog-doctor of you."

9. "But you shall make me a dog-doctor or

a cat-doctor, or a rat-doctor, or a doctor for any thing that is sick," replied Doctor Allright. "And you know me better, Higgins, than to think me too proud to be of use.

10. "My trade is to relieve pain, and though cats and dogs cannot pay the doctor, I hope I shall never refuse to do all I can for them, or think myself too tired to turn out when they need help. But will you take a cup of tea?"

11. "No, thank you, sir," said James, "we had tea, my wife and I, before I came out."

"Well, then," said the doctor, "in a couple of minutes I shall be ready. But in this case I dare say you know more than I do. The dog knew the right doctor's house when he chose yours.

12. "He cannot be in better hands. I don't forget your cure of the brown mare and of my poor old Rover."

"You are very good, sir, but I can't make out whether the bone of the leg is broken or not."

13. "Well, come along." Higgins helped the doctor on with his great coat, and, in making his bow to Mrs. Allright, begged her pardon for asking her husband to go out for nothing but a dog.

14. "James," said the kind doctor, "my duty, and your duty, as a man, is to do what we can

to relieve the sufferings of dumb creatures. I am going to visit the dog not so much as a doctor, as simply a man who happens also to be a doctor."

15. The doctor and Higgins soon reached the cottage, and, after asking about the child, the doctor said, "And now where is my new patient?" For poor Keeper, seeing a stranger, had risen from the hearth, and, being told to be quiet, limped back to his old corner in the dark.

16. The light of a candle being thrown upon him, the doctor looked carefully at his leg. As it was much swollen, he said that nothing could be done till the morning but allow Keeper to rest.

Questions: 1. To whom did James make up his mind to go? 2. What had the doctor done before touching his own meal? 3. What did the doctor say about helping sick animals? 4. What creatures had James cured? 5. What did Keeper do when he saw a new stranger come in? 6. What did the doctor advise?

## 7. THE TWO KITTENS.

1. The two kittens, Tommy and Sammy, had also been disturbed by the entrance of the doctor. After a few moments spent in waking themselves up from a nap which they had been

enjoying in the arms of each other, they were now seated face to face.

2. Each kitten was busy licking the face of his brother. Tommy licked the face, nose, and ears of Sammy so hard that he made him turn and twist his head, but Sammy licked so gently as hardly to let Tommy feel it.

3. "I cannot help watching those funny kittens," said the doctor "Is it not strange that each one licks for the other those parts which he cannot reach himself?"

"It is always so, sir," said James, smiling.

4. "And yet sometimes Tommy, in his great zeal and kindness, and from a wish to make Sammy clean, licks him half-way down his back. But Sammy never licks Tommy's back, because he is a stronger kitten, and is able to do it for himself.

5. "We have been much amused by these kittens, for they are so different in character. They are very fond of each other, and nothing can be more pretty than the way in which they always sleep together.

6. "Often one will place his throat and chin in the hollow of the other's neck. In this way they keep each other warm, and the dark brown-grey of Tommy and the yellow fur of Sammy look very beautiful side by side."

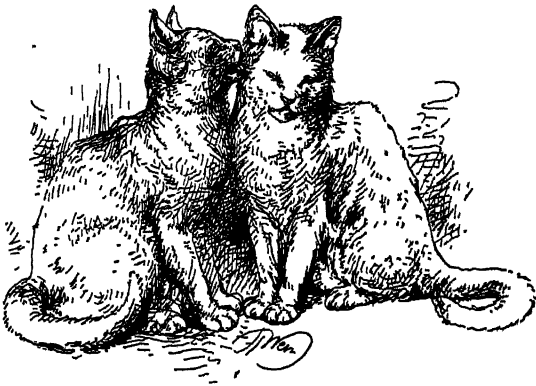
7. "You have taken so much notice of the



outside of your pussies," said the doctor, "that I wonder whether you see much difference in their minds and habits?"

"I am ashamed to talk so much about them," said James, "but since you like to hear, I can tell you that they are as different as they look.

8. "Tommy is a far stronger kitten than



TOMMY AND SAMMY.

Sammy, and is better able to get his own living. He is always ready for food, no matter what it is. But Sammy is more dainty.

9. "Tommy never leaves off while there is anything left in his saucer, but Sammy turns away as if to say, 'Now I have had enough.' There is one thing though which they will both eat at any time, and that is boiled spinach.

10 "When it is hot from the saucepan they

will not meddle with it; but it would make you laugh, sir, to see how they will sit down and wait anxiously till the hot spinach cools.

11. "Their usual games are sham fights, and often the house cannot contain their fun. They scour over the floor, perch upon the backs of the chairs, rush out into the garden and up the trees.

12. "They pounce upon one another, and bite and kick, till the cottage is all alive with the riot. When by chance the play gets too rough, and one or other bites or scratches too hard, a little spitting goes on."

13. "Yes," said the doctor, "whenever the cat is really hurt or frightened it spits. They spit at dogs through fear. It is a curious thing that the camel does the same thing."

14. "It is not often that they hurt each other," said Higgins. "I have seen them sometimes, while sitting face to face, rise on their hind legs to give each other a slap on the cheek with claws outspread.

15. "In doing this I have always seen that they take care not to strike at the eye nor on the nose, where a wound might be given, but only at the fur on the neck.

16. "And after a few of these blows Tommy begins to lick the throat or ears of his brother, as if to say, 'I don't mean any harm. Let us

be friends now.' But it is chiefly the way in which one will give up the best place to the other that I admire.

17. "There is no pushing, no crowding, no violence, but if one has already taken the snuggest corner in their basket or the warmest nook by the fire, the next best is always good enough for the brother.

18. "You see the old cat has now cast them off, as they are no longer helpless. And ever since she did so they have seemed like two loving little orphans caring for each other. Their woollen cloth is always shared peacefully at night."

19. "Your speaking of the woollen cloth reminds me of a habit which both dogs and cats have," said the doctor. "Rather than have no bed at all, they will place themselves on a scrap of paper, or the smallest mat.

20. "They know how bad it is for them to sleep on the cold ground. Paper is a kind of linen or cloth, and the dog and cat know this. It is a clean, cheap bed, as it can be renewed so often without cost."

Questions: 1. What did the two kittens do for each other? 2. Which was the stronger kitten? 3. What was a favourite dish with both kittens? 4. What did the doctor say was the reason why cats spit? 5. In their play, what were the two kittens careful about? 6. What makes an excellent bed for cats and dogs?

### 8. MORE ABOUT TOMMY AND SAMMY.

1. "I am sure, sir," went on James, "that cats, like dogs, will give a friendly greeting to those whom they love after being parted from them. With strangers, cats press their bodies and tails against their legs, but I feel sure that they know the face to be the seat of sense and love.

2. "It is the face of their friends which they always try to reach. When I lift the latch and come in, whether light or dark, Tommy makes a spring as high as my waistcoat directly he hears me. When he has crept to my neck, he tries to rub his nose and head against my cheek.

3. "He would not do that to a stranger. Having done this a few times, he seems to lose his balance, and then leap down again to the floor. He will come back again two or three times though."

4. "And does not Sammy do the same thing?"

"Not with me; he does the same kind of thing with Nelly. I believe that each animal picks out one person to love best, and will not show the same favour to another."

5. "Well," said the chatty doctor, as he rose

to go, "animals are our friends. They were made to live in this world with us, and we with them; and we lose much if we do not mix with the animal world, and share and repay its goodwill."

6. Meanwhile, Keeper had been in a deep sleep before the fire. But during his slumber he had been thinking or dreaming of nothing but his master. He knew that he could never be happy till he was found.

7. As the warmth of the fire made him feel better and more cheerful, he began to think of plans in his doggish brain by which he was to seek him. Lame as he was, Keeper would have been glad to set out that very night when he awoke.

8. But his kind friends, James and Nelly, guessing what he meant by those long, wistful glances at the door, and by the restless movement of his legs, took care not to leave any open place through which Keeper could get out.

9. Doctor Allright had no sooner left than the cottage was shut up for the night. Keeper got up and went towards the door. He wagged his tail, and, in spite of his bad leg, tried to leap at the latch; but Nelly and James would not let him out.

10. "That poor dog," said Nelly, "will get away if we do not take care. He will certainly

go before he is well, James, if we do not tie him fast somewhere till the morning."

11. James thought as his wife did, and having spread a good heap of straw upon the floor of the wash-house, and put a bit of carpet on the top, three times folded, they agreed that he should sleep there.

12. Water and food were placed near the bed, and James then tied a cord round Keeper's neck, taking care to make such a knot as should render it impossible for him to strangle himself if he pulled at it.

13 The gentle dog, seeing that he was to obey, did not resist, but lay down with patient content to wait. But not for one moment did he give up the plan of going after his lost master the first moment that he was free.

14. Animals, as a rule, do what they wish by patient trying rather than by struggles to get their own way. At least, those who have been tamed do so. Once more he stretched his aching limbs to rest, and soon fell fast asleep on the good bed which had been given him.

15. He did not wake all that night, but spent it in a blissful dream that he was once more near his dear friend and owner. In the morning, like many other creatures, he woke to find his pleasant dream untrue.

16. But he took a good long drink of water, and

comforted himself by hoping that soon he would again be loose, and able to find his way along the roads. He was not ungrateful to James and Nelly, but they were not his master.

Questions: 1. What did James say about cats and their greetings? 2. Describe what Tommy did when the blacksmith came home? 3. Whom did Sammy like best? 4. What did the doctor say that we lost by not mixing with the animal world? 5. What did Keeper wish to do after his dream? 6. Where was he placed for the night?

## 9. VISITORS AT THE COTTAGE.

1. The story of Keeper had been spread far and wide through the village. The children who had seen the bulldog in the street, and had watched Keeper running away at full speed, chattered about him to each other at the school.

2. Soon every man, woman, and child in the place had heard of how a beautiful strange dog had been set upon by the butcher's Billy, and that the poor dog, who was much hurt, had taken refuge at the blacksmith's cottage.

3. The doctor, too, had told the news at a great house, the Beech-trees, where the Squire lived. His wife, Lady Mary, and her daughters, with Hugh, a boy of eight years old, listened with interest to the account of Keeper's troubles.

4. They were glad to hear of his kind treat-

ment at the cottage, and, as Nelly was very well known to them, they wished to go and pay her a call. They were all in a great hurry to see Keeper.

5. Lady Mary herself longed to tell the blacksmith's wife how much she admired her for being so kind to a stray dog. She told her children that they would all go to the cottage that day.

6. "And, oh, mother!" said Laura, "you know you said last week that you were going to give Nelly some frocks for little Jemmy. This would be just the right time to do it."

7. "No, dear," said Lady Mary, "I do not think this would be quite the right time. If we were to take this present to Nelly now, it might seem as if we meant to pay her for her goodness to the dog.

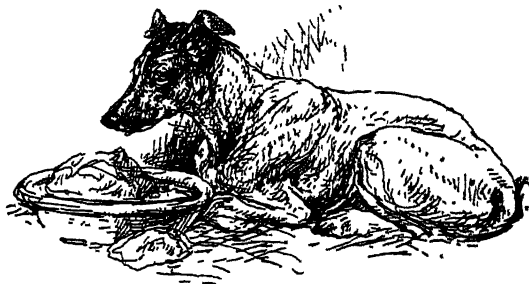
8. "She would not like that, I am sure, for she did it out of pure love and kindness. It is right to pay people for their work, but it hurts the feelings of any good woman to be paid for her kindness. Do you see?"

9. The doctor, who was on a visit to the Squire, said that this was very true. As he mounted his horse, he was pleased to think that Nelly's goodness had been the means of making her friends at the great house fonder of her than ever.



10. "The golden chain of love binds the world together," he said to himself. "It joins the rich to the poor, and men to animals, from the dog and kittens at the blacksmith's to the Squire and Lady Mary in their grand dwelling."

11. Lady Mary and her daughters in the meantime had been getting ready, and soon reached the cottage. "Nelly," said Lady Mary,



THE INVALID.

"you see what it is to keep your doors open. The shelter which you have given to a homeless dog has brought you a pack of visitors this morning.

12. "Doctor Allright has been telling my little ones about it all. And nothing would do but they must come down to pay you and Jemmy and the doggy a visit this morning. Where is the poor thing?"

13. "My lady, we have fastened him with a

cord, for fear he should run away. When I let him loose we are forced to keep the doors shut. But my husband takes him for a run as often as he can."

14. Laura thought Keeper the most lovely dog she had ever seen, and so did Hugh. They told him so, and Keeper wagged his tail at all their kind words, and licked the hands of his little guests.

15. Nelly wished to say as little as she could about the state in which Keeper had come to her, for it was well known that Lady Mary's own eldest son had thrown the stick which gave Keeper his worst wound.

16. The mother did not guess this. She only said what wicked people they must have been who had served the dog so. The blacksmith's wife made haste to talk about something else.

17. She asked the children to come and look at her cocks and hens. She was very proud to show them, and also her pigs. The two kittens came in for their share of notice. Keeper, led by his cord, was glad to come in with them.

18. Much as he wished to break loose, he never once tried to get away, so gentle and good was he. Yet he always kept in mind the hope of running off as soon as he could get a fair chance.

Questions: 1. Who wished to visit Nelly at the cottage? 2. Why would not Lady Mary give Nelly the frocks that day? 3. What did Laura think about Keeper? 4. How was little Jemmy treated by the dog? 5. Why did Nelly wish to say nothing about Keeper's wounds? 6. What did Keeper always hope?

### 10. A BIRD IN TROUBLE.

1. Tommy and Sammy, when they saw so many strangers come in, were much surprised. But Tommy was not afraid. He kept his seat with his two fore-paws under his breast, and lifted his face up to the guests, looking quite pleased.

2. Sammy, who was more timid, hid himself at first, but when he saw Frederick with some gingerbread, which he had brought for the wounded dog, he crept out to get a bit, and allowed himself to be stroked.

3. But as soon as Keeper was brought in, Sammy dropped his bit of gingerbread, bristled his tail, arched his back, and ran sidelong out at the door, spitting as he went.

4. Though he was good friends enough with Keeper when they lay before the fire, Sammy was always filled with fright when he saw the dog come in at the door. Perhaps the kitten thought it was a new dog each time.

5. But he did not stay away long. Soon a

great scratching was heard on the railings in the garden, and Sammy was seen coming down, tail foremost, with a bacon-bone in his mouth, which he had stolen from the next cottage.

6. Over this he was growling very loud, just as if it were a mouse which he had caught, and the neighbour from next door came and took the bone away from him; after this, he was scolded by Nellie for being a little robber.

7. The visitors now set out to walk home, and on the way Hugh found something very strange. It was a little bird, a linnet, which had tangled its foot in a piece of packthread, that had been thrown into the hedge.

8. The linnet hung as if dead, but on taking it into his hand, Hugh found that it could flutter. It thought Hugh was some enemy, for it opened its small beak and tried to bite him.

9. With its slender legs and claws it kicked and scratched, and tried to escape. Hugh held it gently, saying "Come, little bird, you are quite safe. You shall come home with me, and I will take care of you!"

10. Thus held in Hugh's warm hand, it left off beating its wings, and, tired out by its struggles, fell fast asleep. Hugh ran after his mother and sisters to show them what he had found.

11. "Look!" cried he, "what a dear little

bird this is. I shall take it home and keep it." "Oh, Hugh," said Laura, "your bird is quite wild, and will never be happy till you set him free."

12. "But you cannot think how happy I mean to make him," said Hugh. "He shall fly about the room and not live in a cage at all. And I will find nice food for him, and he shall have something good every day."

13. "Still, he will not be free," said Laura. "Just think, Hugh, would you like it yourself? You say that you want this bird to be happy. He does not want anything to make him happy but one thing. Shall I tell you what that is?"

14. "Yes," said Hugh, "I would do anything to make him happy." "Then just open your hand, and let him go," said Laura, "that is all he wants. That, and nothing else, will make him happy."

15. "Then he shall be happy this moment," said Hugh, after thinking for an instant. It was hard for him to give up the pleasure of keeping the bird, but he did not wish to be selfish.

16. He opened his hand. Away darted the little linnnet, and, perching on a twig, began to sing. "He is thanking you for letting him go," said Hugh's mother. "It would have been

nice for you, but not nice for him, if you had kept him.

17. "We must not think only of ourselves. There are many people who call themselves very kind to animals, but they think only of their own pleasure when they keep them in cages.

18. "It is pain for the creatures, and it is bad for the people, too, for it is not good for anyone to find amusement in what gives pain."

"It is all right," said Hugh, "I shall play at cricket this afternoon, and that is better fun than staying in the house feeding a bird."

Questions: 1. What did Sammy do when he saw the ginger-bread? 2. What did he steal? 3. On the way home what did Frederick find? 4. What did he wish to do with the linnet? 5. What did his sister say? 6. What did Hugh think would be better fun than feeding a bird?

## 11. THE SQUIRE'S ELDEST SON.

1. When they came home, they found Henry, the lad who had thrown the stick at Keeper, in a great rage. Some stray cat had killed one of his pigeons, and he was vowing vengeance against all cats, and saying how much he should enjoy hunting this one to death.

2. His father, who overheard him, cried, "For shame, Henry!"

"But, father, though you don't hunt yourself,

all your friends do. If you talk of barbarous sports, what are fox hunting, stag hunting, and pigeon shooting ?

3. "When I am a man I shall do these things, and I can't see why I may not hunt a cat to death now."

"One reason is that the law will punish you if you do. And I hope that by the time you are a man the law will protect all creatures from cruel treatment.

4. "It is high time that men left off being no better than fierce animals; the time for that sort of thing has gone by. What you say is quite true, that it is as cruel to hunt a hare as to hunt a cat, and I trust that soon neither of these things will be done.

5. "As for the cat, she did not know that she was doing harm. She was hunting, which was right enough in her, though it is base in a man. She hunted for her dinner, men hunt only for fun: for the sake of amusing themselves.

6. "Hunting will never make you manly, my boy, it will make you more like a beast. It is the work of a beast, not of a man, to chase creatures weaker than ourselves.

7. "By the bye, what is this I hear about your having half-killed some poor dog down in the village by setting a bulldog at him?"

"It wasn't me," said Henry, getting very red,

for he had looked on while the bulldog had run at Keeper.

8. It was that young Smith's dog, Billy, and he set it at the other, not I."

"Well I would not go about with a young scamp like that, if I were you," said his father. "You will be getting into some low scrape or other.

9. "The people all over the village are saying that you helped to worry the dog. It was Higgins, the blacksmith, who told me. The dog is at his cottage."

"I don't believe it is the same," said Henry, hot and confused.

10. "Oh then, you are guilty of having harmed some dog," said his father.

"I only threw a stick at it," said Henry. "I did not think much about it."

"I wish you would think before you do such things," said his father, as he strolled away.

11. Now Henry had not a bad heart, he was hot tempered, and careless, and idle, but not really cruel. As soon as he was left alone he began to think over what his father had said.

12. Then, bounding away over the lawn, and leaping the railings of the park, he took the shortest cut to the cottage of Higgins. The blacksmith and his wife were going to bed when Henry burst into the room.



13. "I say," he began, stammering a little, "it was I that lamed that dog, and somehow I think it was a shame. If you will give him to me, I will try to make it up to him." "I am glad to hear you say so, sir," said the blacksmith.

14. "We all know well enough that your father's son can't be bad in his heart. And it's a poor place here, we can scarce afford to feed a dog as he ought to be fed. If you will take him, we shall thank you kindly."

15. "Come, old chap, forgive and forget," said Henry, patting Keeper's glossy coat as the string was put into his hand. And so it happened that Keeper was led that night over the soft carpet of the drawing-room at the great house.

16. He had to say good night to everybody, after which he slept in Henry's bedroom. In this way the lad tried to make up for the harm he had done.

Questions: 1. Why was Henry so angry with the cat? 2. What did his father say about a cat's hunting? 3. What did he say about a man's hunting? 4. Instead of making people manly, what will hunting do? 5. Where did Henry run after talking with his father? 6. Where did Keeper sleep that night?

## 12. THE END OF KEEPER'S TRAVELS.

1. The sight of Keeper in the early morning was a great joy for the children at the great house. He was feasted and petted the whole day long; nobody could do enough to make him happy. And yet, was Keeper content?

2. No, his great dark eyes were full of sorrow and want, though he tried to thank his friends for their goodness. Night came, and Keeper was now shut up into a large room on the ground floor, but the following morning a housemaid opened the door.

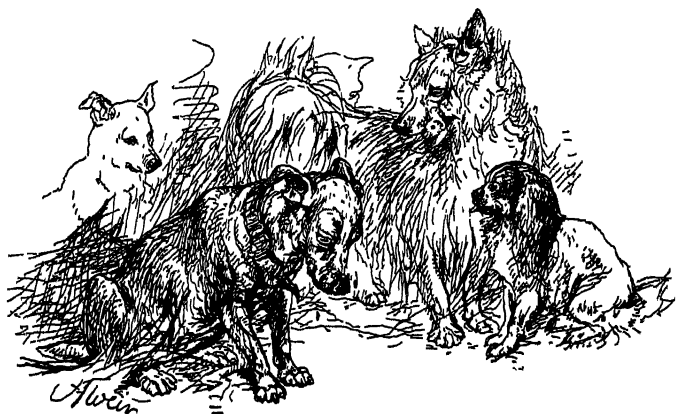
3. Keeper saw a chance. In a moment he had left behind him the park, the village, and his new friends, and taking once more the road, set out for the house in which he and his master had last slept together.

4. Fresh from the repose of the night, and free from collar, cord, and chain, he rushed from the place without being seen, and ran along in good spirits. It was not long before he met a man.

5. This person was a dog-stealer, and he contrived by tricks known to men of his trade to get hold of Keeper. After taking him a long distance in a cart, this man brought Keeper to his shop in a country town far from his own home.

6. Here, with a collar and chain round his neck, Keeper was put into a stable with several other dogs. With drooping tail and ears he grieved at being again a prisoner.

7. One day, as his new master, the dog-stealer, had brought Keeper out of the stable to show him to someone who was likely to buy



A PRISONER AGAIN.

a dog, the faithful creature heard a sound which made him start and quiver with joy.

8. It was a voice which he had been pining for during many months. In an instant the voice spoke to his memory, his head and one of his forepaws were raised, he threw his body back upon his haunches, and his eyes lighted up.

9. For one instant he stood trembling, for fear the sound should not come again. The next moment he sprang up and broke his chain by a sudden jerk. He ran and jumped against the knees of an officer, who, in a red coat, was lounging through the town.

10. The cries, the barkings of the dog could not be hushed. He sprang up to the breast of his beloved master, for his master this time he was sure that he had found.

11. His master was not slow to know Keeper again, stooping to pat his head and sides. The dog licked his face, and then running up and down the street in front of him seemed to say to all who passed, "See, I have found him at last!"

12. Everyone who saw this pretty sight was pleased, except the dog-stealer, who was in doubt. He was not sure whether the man might buy the dog, as it seemed to know him, or whether he would not accuse him of stealing the animal.

13. As he had brought Keeper from a distance, however, he thought, that he was safe. "The dog seems to have taken a fancy to you, sir," said Jerry Simpkins, the dog-stealer, coming up to Keeper's master. "You had better buy him."

14. "Why, my good friend, he is my own dog! It is true that I lost him a long way from

## KEEPER'S TRAVELS.

here. I should very much like to know you got hold of him?"

15. "I bred him myself from a pup," said Jerry, "and so you must have made a mistake. He has never been out of my own hands, and I should not think of parting with him for less than five pounds."

16. Keeper's master now saw that this man was a liar as well as a thief. But he was content to pay the five pounds rather than leave Keeper in his hands. The man made up his mind to steal Keeper again as soon as he could.

17. But Keeper was far too wise a dog for this. From that time he stuck so close to his master's heels that Jerry did not get a chance of coaxing him away. He lived to a good old age, and never a dog was happier than he.

18. The troubles were soon forgotten now that all had ended well. As he grew older Keeper learnt wisdom. He never stayed behind to sniff at baskets of fowls again so as to run the risk of getting lost.

Questions : Where did Keeper sleep on his second night at the great house ? 2. What did he do when the door was opened ? 3. Whom did he meet as he ran away ? 4. What sound did he hear at the dog-stealer's ? 5. What did the thief make up his mind to do ? 6. As he grew older, what did Keeper learn ?

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